

Madame Chiang Kai Shek

(A BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR)

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PREFACE

The golden key to a book is the book itself. Personally I do not believe in prefaces. Still I am out to jot down a few broken words. Rarely we do as we believe! Often we believe what we never have the grit to clothe in practicability.

Madame Chiang Kai Shek is not one of the many. She stands apart. Her courage of conviction is soldierly. She is dauntless in doing. Her thoughts straightway pass into words. Her words mould themselves into actions. She has the rare quality of speaking through actions instead of acting through speeches.

I do not pretend to idolize Madame Chiang Kai Shek. She has all the human weaknesses. Perfection is not the lot of earthly beings. On the other hand, there is no child of dust without a glimmering of glory. There is a deal of littleness in great persons whom we adore, and a deal of greatness in little persons whom we pass by at every turn of the street.

Nevertheless, this book is out and out a labour of love. Without the flame of her worship, the following pages would never have seen the light of day. I nurse a burning admiration for Madame Chiang Kai Shek. If love be a sin, I am, in the Shakespearean phrase, the greatest sinner alive.

I am acutely aware of numerous shortcomings of this book. First, it has been drafted with lightning rapidity. Secondly, my soul still dived into the unseen, as my head dived into the seen. I relished the living presence of God as my nib dipped into the ink. In

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CHAPTER I

DOWN THE TIDE OF HISTORY

China is at once the oldest and the youngest nation in the world. It is the oldest in its civilization and wealth of heritage, but the youngest in its life-and-death struggle for existence, a very gasping for a breath in the democratic atmosphere.* But as good old Charlie Soong, the father of Madame Chiang-Kai-shek, used to whistle his way home, "China is still China." It is a body of different people and indifferent parts, but the heart and soul of China is one in culture and feeling. So it has been for centuries since the very dawn of civilization. So it is to-day when the changes are taking place swiftly on the face of China. And so it shall be everlastingly. As a lively thinker puts it, there will never be a Chinese Napoleon. Nor will there ever be a Confucius of the white race. The Napoleonic struggle for individualism was a mere pricked bubble compared to the majestic steam of Confucius's teaching. The latter is still the guiding hand in the moulding of the Chinese Republic.

China had a great past. To the ancient Chinese, it has been nicely stated, the Chinese civilization was not *a* civilization, but *the* civilization, and the Chinese way of life not *a* way, but *the* way of life, the only one conceived

* "China is an ancient nation but a young republic."—

"THE TRIBUNE," Lahore, in its editorial, dated March 8, 1942.

by the minds of men. It has long been a country hide-bound with hardened forms of custom and conduct, which rigidly enveloped her. China is a vast country with a dense population hoary with ancient ideas and ideals. The main aim of the Chinese was to avoid change. They longed to be left aloof. There wore queues, and disliked the short-haired 'barbarians.' They pinned their faith in the fortune-tellers, and "*fengshui*" (the spirits of wind and water) threaded their life. If the word "impossible" was not in Napoleon's dictionary, the word 'mei-yu-fa-tze' (impossible) ate into the very vitals of the Chinese society.

China was self-contained. Really she needed nothing from the outside world. She remained shut up within the confines of her own borders. Still she developed arts of high quality. The navigator's compass was invented in China. Silk culture, gun-powder, paper printing, and many other things were fathered by the clever Chinese. They were adept in several sciences, such as astronomy, metreology, medicine and surgery, ages ago.

The Chinese, however, resented new methods; new inventions and new people. Mining was frowned upon. It was believed that a hole dug deep into the ground would release angry dragons. When the first railway appeared in China, it was swiftly torn up and had to be transported elsewhere. It would disturb the spirits. Time and tide broke down the evil influence of the gods. When the motor car first appeared, it was to

the ignorant people nothing but a death-dealing fiery dragon. Its noise and clatter would rob the people of their mental peace. Now the very objectors crowd the buses and ply the trucks as nimbly as the most modernized men in other corners of the globe. Under the glare of scientific progress, the search-light of modern knowledge puts China's beauties into strange relief. When a German hears of German *Kulture*, he immediately reaches out for a gun, but when a Japanese speaks of "Asiatic Culture," the Chinese women tremble and scream. The sinister gifts of Goddess Europa to old China are a choice between Peace-and-Slavery and Progress-and-War. The gifts of the West are given to China in two hands, in one hand the arts of peace, and in the other the arts of war, and she has to take the both.

The birth of modern China dates from the sack of Peking in 1900 which gave the people a rude shock and stirred the nation out of its age-long slumbers. It overthrew the Manchu dynasty, led to the break-up of the Manchu Empire in 1911, and brought the first breath of emancipation. During the reign of the Manchus, the dumb millions had no voice in the Government of the nation. While the people were expected by the tax-collectors to open their purses, they were obliged to shut their mouths on their grievances. This system caused the masses to forget entirely affairs of state. They confined themselves to matters making for the betterment of their own lot. The family became the

most important factor in Chinese life. All the people asked was to be left alone to eke out an existence. Patriotism had apparently died a natural death. Years and years of ceaseless energetic effort had to be made to awaken the mute masses to an understanding of civic rights and duties. The revolution that overthrew the Manchus was started by the late Dr. Sun Yat-Sen. He underwent years of danger before he could safely rest his feet in his own country. But the time did come when he and his followers were able to awaken articulate sections of the public to a realization of their benighted state.

The Chinese nation emerged from thralldom in 1911. The general lack of education saw the republic born in China with few competent to tend the nurseling. The old official class resented so radical a change of control. At this period much was expected of the men of new learning. But the students returned from America and elsewhere could do little. Their mental make-up was not fitted for the task that faced them. In any case they were warmly disliked by old-time officialdom. The returned students were, however, wrong in their approach. In many cases they tried to have foreign methods adopted willy-nilly instead of working for a steady upward movement. Tears and broken hearts were almost the order of the day. Soon the stream of returned students, equally burdened with high degrees and broken hopes, drifted from expected spheres of technical usefulness into the humble ranks

of teachers of the young idea. This collapse of lofty hopes was tragic. There was no hope for China until its students rolled up their sleeves and abandoned their "white collar" attitude towards anything savouring of manual exertion. They gave up the fleshpots of the coastal cities and marched into the interior where the movie, the night club, and the soda fountain do not exist. Here they are making noteworthy contributions in the application of their technical knowledge and skill.

The Kuomintang Party fathered the national revolution. It had the responsibility of preparing the people for Self-Government. The first constitutional effort proved to be a fiasco. When the Manchus were overthrown, Dr. Sun Yat-Sen was made provisional president. Yuan Shih-Kai, then the most powerful man in the northern part of China, who was in command of a united military force, effected the abdication of the Manchus on the ground that he should be the first president of China. A constitution was drafted by the Revolutionary party, and its phrases were so framed as to curtail the powers of Yuan Shih-Kai as president. The latter, however, had other plans at his elbow. He got from America a constitutional adviser in the person of Professor Frank J. Goodnow. Pretending to a high sense of legality, Yuan Shih-Kai was properly elected as president by a parliament on October 6th, 1913. But the very next month he contrived the collapse of parliament. Dr. C. T. Wang,

the leader of the Senate in those hectic days, narrowly escaped with his life. A foreign friend saw him out of Peking in the grey dawn of the morning. Events moved fast. Yuan Shih-Kai plunged himself into a scheme to ascend the Dragon Throne as emperor. A puppet body created by him posed as a parliament. The dramatic story came to an unexpected end by his sudden death on June 6th, 1916.

China was mercilessly betrayed by her allies at the Versailles Conference in 1919. It precipitated the student movement and marked the beginning of Young China. 1926 marks the beginning of a new era. It was in that year that Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek marched for the north to put an end to the rule of the war lords. The Northern Expedition made easy progress. It captured Hankow, an important key city, and other ports on the Yangtze River. The Russians laboured fast and furiously. With adriotic quietness, they tried to secure control of administrative reins. They saw an easy prey in China for the sway of Red influence. The Chinese leaders were alarmed. The end was that the Kuomintang decided to evict them lock, stock, and barrel. Most of them made a spectacular flight out of China across the Gobi Desert back to the confines of the Soviet.

Hankow was then the cradle of what is now the National Government. China was seen through a haze of pessimism heading pell-mell to the hopeless bow-wows. Imperialism was red rag to the Chinese

bull. It continued to fight the war lords. They gradually fell beneath its blows. Chang Tso-lin, the last of them, was driven from Peking in 1928. As he was approaching Mukden, his headquarters in Manchuria his train was bombed by persons within the ken of the Japanese. When Chang Hsueh-liang, the son of the assassinated Chang Tso-lin, succeeded his father as the ruler of Manchuria, he decided to put his provinces under the control of the National Government at Nanking. This greatly displeased the Japanese. Hence the flag of the Rising Sun advanced into Manchuria on September 18th, 1931.

The Manchurian incident was betrayed at the League of Nations in 1932. It forced the very healthy realization that China must rely upon herself. The League of Nations proved to be an unstable reed and China was riven to its vitals. The gyrating boomerrang swung and smote the powers themselves. The wind was recklessly sown. The whirlwind that was born of it has since raged unchecked in corners and corridors of the world. The festering debris it has left in its wake lies strewn about for all men to see. "Out of this tragic evidence of human frailty and international weakness," says Madame Chiang Kai-shek, "the Chinese learned the lesson to expect nothing from anyone. In most quarters the Chinese accepted the condition with a philosophy consistent with their age-long teaching. A few were bitter. The wise ones regarded it all as a significant and potent

lesson to China—a lesson that would teach the various factions in their country that they must abandon stupidities and follies and learn to goose-step into a position of power which would gain them respect among outside nations. They learned, in short, that not only God, as Napoleon said, but everyone else was on the side of the big battalions.”*

Thanks to the uninterrupted goading of Japan between 1932 and 1939, the people of China were kept at a boiling point of indignation and hatred, which engendered the will to resist. And then there came the World War II which has engulfed the entire globe. Spiritual mobilization has fanned Chinese nationalism and anti-Japanese hatred into a glowing flame. This nationalism is the nightmare of Japan. To the utter dismay of the Japanese war-lords there is no selling out of Chinese generals and politicians. The morale of the people behind the front, as John Gunther says, cannot be described by any other word but “magnificent.” That is why Japan has failed to beat China to her knees.

China fights on, battered and bruised, but not beaten.

* “China at the Crossroads” by General and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek.

CHAPTER II.

IN THE WOMB OF TIME.

If soul does survive the framework of bones ; if "dust thou art to dust returneth" was really not spoken of the soul ; if the spirit in man is an eternal flame ; if this flame cannot be quenched by death ; if the disembodied soul is a living, feeling, thinking creature ; if "to be or not to be," has puzzled even the master mind of Shakespeare : if the transmigration of soul is a fact ; if the universe is not a mere battle-field of blind forces ; if the world is a cosmos and not a mere chaos ; if life is a divine scheme ; if the foundations of Indian, Chinese and Egyptian outlook of existence are not shaky and sandy : I daresay that Soong family of China is a brotherhood of selfless patriots with super humanities which extend over a cycle of births and re-births. Personally I see no reason to doubt the mathematical positivity of these "ifs." I have more faith in the *Secret Doctrine* of Madame Blavatsky than in Newton's *Laws of Motion*.

Soon Chia Ju was the leader of that shining band. who was he in his last body ? It is difficult to daresay. In this life he was a mere golden-haired cabin-boy in the last quarter of the last century. Like Napoleon, he was born in an island. Unlike Napoleon, he was a

soldier of peace. Native of the Island of Hainan, South of even Southern China, this lad had fire in his heart and light in his eyes.

The Isle of Hainan had the earliest touch with American pioneers. Young Master Soon had heard of the sky-scrapers in New York Sooner than the youngsters in the heart of China. America called him. No doubt. The pomp and show of Americanism lifted up his spirits. Off he sailed for America. His uncle in Boston invited him. He was told to be a tea-boy. And wanted to be a school-boy. But Destiny drove him to be a cabin-boy. At last he drove the Destiny. Over the bosom of a wild Pacific sea ! Midway between China and America ! Under the stars and the stripes ! There sailed the lad of Destiny. A golden moment in the history of China !

At Boston he worked as a tea-boy in the shop of his uncle. It was a respectable little firm, "Oriental Tea and Silk, Wholesale and Retail." The nephew had to put up with a shrewed businessman, small of build and lightly made. For a number of months Young Soon busied himself in wrapping rolls of fine silk and drinking a delicious tea. The shop was a popular haunt of a few Chinese students who talked politics for the betterment of their motherland. To these the young boy lent an eager ear. His appetite for going to a school was fanned into a flame, but the shopkeeper would rather wash his hands of his nephew than give in. At last, the quarrel came to a head, and the boy escaped

stealthily, having an extra breakfast, wearing a shirt over a shirt and a pant over a pant in a hot merciless day.

The youngster threw himself into a whirlpool of unknown faces, because he had felt "being a part of some great thing" and his close-fisted uncle was a spoke in his wheel. Not entirely glad to be rid of his stingy boss, the dreamy boy roamed to and fro in search of a job. He was at his wits' end, before he found shelter as a cabin-boy in the American clipper ship "Colfax", that plied between Boston and Savannah.

In the eighties of the last century, America still lived Christianity. Not merely believed it. Much less talked of it. She had not yet shaken off the yoke of religion. Charles Jones, the captain of the ship, was a gentleman of gruff manners but a kindly heart. He had travelled far and wide, and these were the days when every Christian traveller was a Missionary. So the captain did not mind adding one more lamb, of Chinese quality, to the fold of Lord Christ.

An appeal to the heart is stronger than an appeal to the head. The first is a romantic style of the vagabond, the other is the classic habit of the priest. The captain did not win the cabin boy by the bell and the book. He won the roseate chap by the magnetism of his personality. The boy was washed in holy water. This water is holy by faith. This faith was the ruling principle of his life. Christianity in China has played

a mightier role than in any other country. The Chinese Christians are Christians indeed. They have no personal axe to grind. A living example to their brethren in India. Christianity, like Buddhism, will survive in China long after it has died in the land of its birth. China is a land of belief. Faith, not falsity, is the thread of Chinese life. This confidence is bound to work miracles.

The young Chinese embraced Christianity. Rather Christianity embraced him. Where? The Fifth Street Methodist Church in Wilmington, North Carolina. Captain Charles Jones acted as his godfather. The seafaring gentleman not only gave the cabin-boy his religion. But also his name. Thus Soon Chia Ju became Young Charles Jones Soong, the founder of the most dynamic family in modern history.

Going to sea is, however, not going to a school. Young Soong's thirst for Western education remained unslaked. Divinity was playing into his life. Why did he crave for a school? Where was his Destiny leading him? He unfolded his mind to Captain Jones. The latter said, "Try Georgia. The people won't turn you down as cold." Georgia! Sweet sunny Georgia! There was something about the people there. They were soft-spoken and polite. Quite unlike the people in the North. Cold North is calculating. Warm South is cordial. Man after all is the child of time and clime. He does dance to the tune of the atmosphere, much like weather-cock. So Georgia was the place. Georgia

has now an honourable mention in the stirring chronicles of China.

Young Soong had three friends ; Good God, Firm Faith, and Dire Determination. Destiny was his guardian angel in the voyage of life. Bidding farewell to the noble captain, he wandered ashore. In the ship he had learnt knotting hammocks of cord. This stood him in good stead. The cabin-boy became a salesman. He knocked about from door to door and had a very stiff time indeed. When all his hopes crashed and his heart was sinking fast, Almighty Father lent him a hand in the person of General Julian Carr, of Durham, North Carolina.

The retired military officer was touched by the zest of the Young supersalesman for going to school. He bought a pair of hammocks. Promised nothing more. Young Soong wandered far afield, making the both ends meet by the sweat of his brow. The prickly heat even browned his skin. In the meantime, the General received a letter from Captain Jones to assist a certain Young Chinese selling hammocks in his district. But where was Master Soong? The General did not know his whereabouts. Days rolled by. Then as sure as an angel Master Soong turned up one day. He did not come as a salesman. He was just tempted by the inviting driveway of the good old General in whose eyes he had read a message of hope during his last visit. He had written a letter to his uncle. There was a rough reply. Anyhow, Young Soong did not want

to be tied by a kind of obligation. He relied on faith and fate.

It was darkling. Some one was picking his way among the shrubs. Soong caught his breath. He might pass for a thief. An unpleasant experience, and by no means uncommon. He brushed the dust off his clothes. He had a very lonely sinking feeling in his heart. "Who's there?" a gruff voice called. Through the bushes appeared the head of General Carr. He had on a misshapen hat. A three-cornered tear peeped in his faded coat sleeve. He was peering through the bushes in the failing light.

Young Soong reminded the General of his last visit. "Yes, yes", rang out uncertainly. The old man shaded his eyes and looked hard at the young boy. And lo! the General awaited him at the turning point of Destiny. "You are the boy who is going to school," he said. "That's it, is it? Peddling all summer, have you?" He was told of the letter received from the pastor of Wilmington and the captain of the "*Colfax*." Young Soong was overwhelmed. His joy knew no bounds. That night he dined royally with the family. Soong sat at the table with them all, the General, his wife, his two daughters. He had no son. They were kind hosts. They urged him to eat his fill. He felt their gentleness breezing down his veins. And he did full justice to the dishes.

At last the meal was over. The guest bade good-night to the host. "Come to-morrow," said the old

man. "This is my card. I must think of everything. I did not know where you were. No one knew. Now we must come to a point." Back to the lights of the village, Soong looked hard at the card: "General Julian S. Carr." The way led him on. That night he was too excited to sleep. New hope danced in his breast.

The dazed boy saw his god-father the next afternoon. Searching questions were asked. Clear-cut answers were given. Duke University was decided upon. It was a small university. So large attention was expected. General Carr promised to meet the expenses. He would iron out what Soong could not straighten himself. But he must not be bothered with petty things.

A short while after Charlie Soong was registered as a student. It was a thrilling moment. He was young and odd. Others were so much at home. By and by his class-mates reached out to him. At times his tongue faltered. He failed to find the words. But the response in his bright black eyes was ready. The students soon began to count on "Charlie." His good spirit never failed. Writing to General Carr, he said, "My one purpose is to serve China. She needs a road leading into the knowledge of the outside world." Soong made up his mind to engineer that highway. The heart of the patron warmed up. He remembered the light in Charlie's face. "Crazy to go to school—just crazy to go," he said. "I wish every American had his

determination."

Soong wanted a theological training. So he farewelled the Duke University. And shifted to Vanderbilt. It was a little hard to do. Because he had made fast friends. But the ideal must be above passing ideas. Even the little blue-eyed office stenographer hung about Charlie. She said in her drawling voice, "Aw, don't go, Charlie." He looked at her wonderingly. There were some other Chinese students in the Vanderbilt University. They pulled on well together. Charlie soon became a great pet. Something was going out of him to all around. Often he was lured into functions. A young professor soon caught Charlie's spirit, and his determination to serve China. They spent hours together. "I wish I had ten—one hundred lives to give," Charlie used to say. "I should give them all to China." The young professor studied Charlie. He came to love him. "He is tackling the job of a whole race," he thought.

One day Charlie Soong stood in his cap and gown. The diploma was in his hand. General Carr and his pastor from Wilmington stood beside him. "I cannot repay you," he said, "except by what I can do in my life in China." There they stood silent in the afternoon sunshine. Charlie Soong was thinking of China with a great upsurging of the heart. He wanted to tear off his cap and gown, pack, begone! His work lay ahead!

The ship cut its way through the foam of the

Pacific. It was loaded with Destiny. Then the water changed from deep blue to a muddy yellow. The waters lapped the brown shores of China. The boy returned home. Warm feeling rushed through him. He felt national spirit in Shanghai. There the people lived on realities, the flavour of crisp vegetables and the beauty of an old scroll. They did not strain towards the impossible. Why struggle for anything? Charlie felt it engulfing him. But he shook off the Orient philosophy. His determination was burning and hot within him. China must change.

Charlie found a job at Shanghai in a Methodist Boys' High School. He spoke at social gatherings. There were men in flowing Chinese gowns, and men in Western suits of uncertain creases. Women in short flowered satin jackets and finely plaited black silk skirts. The lilies of the fair sex were clustered at one end of the long room. There were a little ill at ease, overcome by a schoolgirl shyness. Their cheeks were growing pink. Heads tossed with bright ready smiles. There was a certain belle of medium build. She was dressed in a peach coloured jacket edged with black. It brought out the faint pink and ivory of her face. A single, small, filigree ornament was thrust into the smooth oval knot of her hair. It was Miss Ni. She had the skin of magnolia blossoms. Her hair was as fine as silk. Two tiny dimples at the corners of her mouth twinkled bewitchingly. No wonder, she stole the heart of the young fresh schoolmaster. Her low,

bright laugh rang out. And Soong caught a side glimpse of her face.

At night Young Soong slept with the image of her strong vivid face. The dimpled smiles lit up his dreams. They were meant for each other. Miss Ni was a Christian. Miss Ni was a virgin. Miss Ni was able and pretty. There was a firmness in her jaw and a determination in the carriage of her head. Charlie agonized over what to do. He did not want to woo in the old-fashioned way. He wrote her boldly and was answered frankly. A month later, the wedding-day was set. He came, he saw, he won. He was penniless, but he hoped to catch up money. The wedding day was clear and cold. There was a touch of spring in the air. Miss Ni insisted on simplicity. "Neither of us has money," she said. "Why should we be so foolish as to borrow?" Marriage took place in the Methodist Church in 1886. They went up different aisles and met at the altar. The bride had a smiling, witty face. Full of radiant personality that was herself. Soong was sick with joy.

They made a tiny little nest of a home. Young Mrs. Soong mingled charming determination with heady optimism. The little house radiated courage and hope. At the end of the first year a son was born. They named him Tse-ven. The birth of the child seemed to be a spur to Charlie. He resigned from the school and built up a Y.M.C.A. for all China. He held the child close, adoring him. Then the second

child, Ai-ling, a girl, appeared on the mortal sphere. Charlie sniffed the fragrance of the little face. Then the two girls, Clung-ling and Mei-ling, brilliant souls, one after the other, took human form. Ching-ling was a mite of a child and sweetly Clung to her father. Mei-ling had a sparkling knavish face. "Put Ching-ling down!" she said digging her toes into father's side. "She is too big! I am the baby!" Tottering on her short sturdy legs she said, "Daddy, hold me!" Then the last two boys T. L. and T. A. were born.

The Soong home was a very bulwark of security. The six Soong children were a loyal, closely knit group. Mother Soong was sweet and certain. Father Soong was lively and loving. Dandling the smallest of the six on his crossed leg, he had a way of half-singing, "When the Soong Six get into action, old Confucius will turn in his grave!" Mother Soong did not quite approve. The small child looked up from his perch on his father's hanging foot and shouted gleefully, "China! China!" Before the turn of the century the Soong Six formed a fraternity which was responsible for the birth of New China. They nursed the Goddess of Democracy in the hoary cradle of civilization.

CHAPTER III.

THE GOLDEN DAYS OF GIRLHOOD.

When the churches in Shanghai rang in the Twentieth century, a semi-westernized lodging in the International Settlement housed three Chinese fairies. Ailing was the eldest, Mei-ling the youngest, and Ching-ling the mindful go-between. The three nymphs had three brothers, sweetly and simply called T.V., T.L., and T.A.

The Six Soongs had a cheery time. They tripped about merrily in the cosy little garden. The feet of the girls were not tied after the Chinese fashion. Father Soong had disallowed the practice, much against the goodwill of his wife.

"Mother," said Mei-ling knavishly, "how thankful we are about our feet!"

"You funny child!" was the answer.

Mother Soong was rather heavily built. She was dressed in a closely plaited black silk skirt and brocaded satin jacket. Her hair were dark with a touch or two of silver, combed back to a knot at the nape of her neck, so smoothly that it shone like satin. A small delicate hair-ornament of seed-pearls and jade was thrust in. Her brow, high and smooth. Her eyes, quick in movement. Her nose, rather straight and high

for a Chinese. Her lips, firm and set above a prominent chin. Her hands, small, plump and smooth. This was the queen of the house.

Mei-ling, the youngest of the three sisters, was a spirited girl. She was puckish. Li Amah, the nurse, had a deal of trouble in keeping her within the bounds. There was a boyish light in her eyes, and pleasure tingled up and down her spine. She had a zest for life and was always alive with fun.

"But if I were a boy instead of a girl," said Mei-ling mockingly, "there is a great deal that I could do when I grow up."

"Don't be silly," said Ai-ling. "If you want to do things, you can do them anyway. Look at Mother! She's as important as Father, don't you think? But now, be quiet and listen to what Father is saying."

"Hear! hear!" put in Ching-ling. "That man said China is asleep. That man with the eyes."

Father Soong was talking to a circle of friends. His drawing room was a lively haunt. "That man with the eyes" was Dr. Sun Yat-sen. The young doctor was a friend of the family. Mr. Soong and Mr. Sun were thick as thieves. They were cradled in idealism and were akin in their outlook on China.

Father Soong did not shelve his mission of life. His American days came swimming before his eyes. If Wilmington baptised him in water, Shanghai baptised him in fire. In his heart there contended the love of China as she was, and the dream of China as she

might be.

"Three sons, three daughters!" mused old Charlie. "Well, they shall all have an American education, and if they come back feeling as I did, we shall have six strong workers for a new China."*

The six children of destiny sailed for America. Father and Mother Soong bore them a company. The homely nurse would not undergo the pangs of separation. She would rather be tossed over the rolling seas. So Li Amah went too. The small Soongs jumped from one piece of baggage to another. Odd baskets were piled in the narrow front yard of the Soong home. Li Amah had a pig-skin trunk, little tin cans of salted cabbage, and packages of pickled bean-curd. The boys sat on a great trunk, swinging their heels resoundingly. Father Soong was in a half-distraught condition in the excitement of getting his family off to America. The three girls were flitting in and out. Mei-ling kept circling round her eldest sister, saying, "I love your hair that way. I love it!"

Ai-ling spoke matter-of-factly: "Oh, Ching-ling and Mei-ling, let's promise that nothing, nothing will ever change things between us, that always we shall be just as we are, no matter what happens in America, no matter what happens when we come back, whom we marry, where we go, what our work is, we shall always be the same three sisters! Somehow, I feel a

*"Three sisters" by Cornelia Spencer.

little afraid when I look ahead. So many things could happen. When Father and Dr. Sun talk of revolutions, and changing China, something goes cold in me. I love China as she is!"

"Here we go!" said Mei-ling. "Goodbye, house! Goodbye, garden! Good-bye—" "Don't, please!" said Ching-ling, brokenly, grasping one of Mei-ling's free-swinging small hands. "It's too hard. Let's just go, if we are going."

It was a very calm summer crossing for the Soong family. A stormy cold wind struck the ship. Gusts of rain splashed over the decks. The children got used to the motion of the ship. But Mother Soong sat closely bundled in her deck chair. Slowly the ship drew into line with the wharf, cables fell splashing into the water. There were gruff sharp orders. Excitement filled the air. Soong children had a glint of zeal in their eyes.

"The Americans are always in a great hurry," said Charlie. "It is best to let them rush on. We must keep our pace." In a mood of absent-mindedness, he pushed his hat back. But Mei-ling, with a quick touch, pushed it forward again. "Father," she said softly, "we are in America, you must not look like a wild person." Shanghai had a mere sprinkling of Westerners. Here were so many. It seemed odd. White men were pulling the cables. The little boys danced down the high gangway.

Father Soong was as impatient as any schoolboy.

He was anxious to have all go smoothly. They had a change-over to the train for the transcontinental trip. T.V. took charge of the keys. The red-faced customs officer stared at all the family. Then burst out, "Understand English? All these yours? Setting out to colonize the New World? Lord!" Charlie laughed good-humouredly. America passed before their eyes in the days which followed. Every city had dumps full of tin cans and papers. Chinese dollar is American penny. Charlie's face was aglow because of what lay ahead. The train went like a tiny creeping caterpillar on a great space.

They detrained at Summit, New Jersey. Ai-ling got herself ready for Macon. She was seen off at the station. "Doesn't she look nice?" said Mei-ling, squeezing Ching-ling's hand. Ai-ling stood very slim and straight in her dark costume and plain hat. A great deal of honest pride was mingled in the face of Father Soong. The eyes of the two small boys were fixed on the great engine. They were waiting to hear the first exciting puffs. The train steamed out gently. Ai-ling waved. Mei-ling waved. T. A. piped back home very sadly. The next day Ching-ling and Mei-ling went to school. The latter danced about in the freedom of a short-pleated skirt. Ching-ling drew the older girls by her quiet sweetness. Mei-ling soon had a little clan of younger ones. They were charmed by her great sparkling eyes. Her endless vitality was fascinating. By and by they also went to

Macon. A great load was lifted from Charlie Soong's mind. Chingling was registered in the Sub-Freshman class, as Ai-ling had been, in the Wesleyan College, Mei-ling was only ten years old. She could not be admitted into the regular classes directly. So she was tutored by Miss Burks, the daughter of the Professor of Literature. By a special arrangement she was allowed to live in the college dormitory. She talked naively. Her face beamed with delight in a cluster of American girls.

One day Charlie noticed waves of thought beclouding the brow of Ching-ling. "I have felt it", brooded Father Soong, "since I was a small boy in my uncle's tea-shop in Boston—not the revolution, I don't mean that, but the idea of being a part of some great thing, I feel it still. I am a part—you are a part—we all are part of the great sweeping change which is coming to China. That is why we are here, all eight of us, coming to learn and prepare ourselves for the work we shall do for China."

By and by the parents returned to China, and the young students were left alone to delve into the mines of Western knowledge. The three sisters differed in their traits of character. Ai-ling was a born leader. She was a practical politician of day-to-day life and there was no humbug of idealism about her. Ching-ling was a maid of silence. Things were so bottled up in her, one could never tell how much she was feeling. She was an emblem of self-sacrifice which found no

tongue. Like a goddess she suffered alone. And Mei-ling ! with jet-black hair waving softly round her face, was a cherub of sunshine, fraught with fun and brilliant ability. Her unexpectedness of behaviour thrilled her classfellows. Her charm and pertness was captivating. Mie-ling was thoroughly Americanized. Her perfect Georgian accent, amused the listeners. "Are you really Chinese ?" gasped a student. "Why, but you talk American !" One day she donned her Chinese dress and sent a wave of fright into the spine of a fresh student who took her for a heathen.

Mei-ling did exceptionally fine in her school work. In spite of her knavishness, she was a shining student, quite at home in anything and everything. She was popular both with the teachers and the taught. Facts and figures were on the tip of her tongue. She, however, was not a book-worm. She could not learn by rote. Things came naturally to her, like leaves to a tree. Her knowledge was telling, her manners winning.

Dreaming of the days ahead, Mei-ling remarked, "I don't even know what I want to study in college, only I'd like to take everything—everything ! I wonder how long I would have to stay to finish all the courses here. I think that is what graduations ought to be—taking all the courses—knowing all the college can teach !"

How unlike the ideas of the boys and girls of to-day ! Every student wants to lift the minimum load of educa-

tion. We are afraid of stuffing our brains with knowledge. Books are a bogey for the present generation of students. Ignorance walks on stilts in schools and colleges. Universities are mere mills for coining the graduates.

When Mei-ling did go to college, she took the hardest line of courses. She decided to major in English literature and minor in Philosophy. She elected to study French, Piano and Violin all four years. When Mother Soong heard of it, she was shocked beyond measure. "The child will kill herself", she said. But Father Soong held another view. The Soong children in the land of the Stars and the Stripes enjoyed a charter of freedom and must have their way.

Mei-ling was shining but by no means selfish. She lent a willing hand to all her needy companions. One day she noticed blankness writ large in the face of a girl student attending a lecture in the Philosophy class. Miss Soong judged aright that her bench mate - Miss America did not grasp head or tail of the subject. The lecture over, Miss China coached Miss America in the "Persistent Problems of Philosophy."

Then there came the inevitable moment of farewells. Ai-ling, after her graduation, was ready to embark for China. Mai-ling said to her with prophetic feelings, "You will be there years before Ching-ling, and Ching-ling will be there years before me! And the revolution will come! I am sure of it! I think we shall never be together again." The forecast was weighed in the mistakeless balance of Father Time and

was not found wanting.

One by one the Soong sisters, with a great uprising of the heart, said goodbye to Wesleyan, to Miss Burks, and to their sweet little home in Macon. They set out on a voyage of destiny in a vessel of unfaltering determination, captained by the Goddess of Patriotism herself, and their story is rooted in the very soil of China.

Miss Ai-ling Soong, the eldest of the three semi-Americanised sisters, was the first to land at Shanghai. Extremely shrewd, the maid of practicability built no castles in the air. But these were the days of drastic changes and China was the apex of the revolutionary whirlpool.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen had bricked up his dreamy castles. There is no doubt that the plans were engineered in comradeship with Old Charlie. The latter was behind the scenes. Dr. Sun formed *Kuo-Min Tang* or the People's National Party. Kuomintang sounded the death-knell of imperialism in China. The iron determination of Dr. Sun coupled with crystal sincerity was crowned with victory. The Revolution of 1911-12 upset the Manchu Empire and tore the tapestry of imperialism to shreds. The terrified Manchus fled hurry-scurry to all directions. A government of the people, for the people and by the people was set up. Dr. Sun Yat-sen was installed as the first President of the Chinese Republic.

Ching-ling and Mei-ling, still biding their time in the

land of George Washington, were mightily thirsty for news from home. They hunted through every edition of local dailies to get at the stop-press news about the Chinese Revolution. They were naturally enthused to know the activities of their own family. When they read in the papers a deal about Dr. Sun and nothing about the responsibilities shouldered by their father, Miss Ching-ling was overwhelmed with depression. Blue clouds passed across her brow. "He and Mother are both teachers and reformers," she said moodily, "but not political leaders." Miss Mei-ling thought otherwise. She knew that her father was financing the Revolution and was aiding the patriots selflessly and showlessly. When the news of victory crossed the Pacific, the little hearts of the lovely maids leapt with joy. Miss Ching-ling Soong wrote an article for the College Magazine on this thrilling subject. It was entitled, "The Greatest Event of the Twentieth Century."

What was Miss Ai-ling doing? China expected her to do her duty. And China was not disappointed. Immediately she went into action as a Secretary to Dr. Sun Yat-Sen. But the eldest Soong was imbued with realism. Unlike her younger sister, Ai-ling was not ailing for a revolutionary career. She loved luxury, an easy life, and the fruits of peace and plenty.

One fine day, the Soong students in America received the tidings that their eldest sister was now Madame H. H. Kung. She married Dr. Kung Hsiang-hsi,

the seventy-fifth lineal descendent of Confucius, the greatest saint-philosopher of China. Dr. H. H. Kung was born under a lucky star, with a golden spoon in his mouth, rolled in luxury, and had a knack of making easy money. Mother Soong was quick to appreciate that he was the aptest husband for her daughter. In short, Madame Kung had a merry time between China and Japan, wintering at one place and summering at the other.

The Soong family was entrenching itself as the master of the pocket-book of China. Since the revolution of 1911, China underwent a bewildering series of political changes and civil wars. It has been aptly said, "When the Soongs get into action, old Confucius will tremble in his grave!" It is a family of brilliant contrasts, as unorthodox as it is powerful. The fortune of old Charlie Soong formed the backbone of the Third Revolution, but his children formed the bulwark of the Republic.

The year 1913 saw Miss Ching-ling Soong westward-bound for China with a made-up mind. She had chewed her plans through the livelong nights long before she got her degree. She had spun a yarn of dreams which to her was a concrete reality. Her soul was imbued with an ideal without which her life would be colourless.

Kissing her motherland, Miss Ching-ling took up the threads of a career which her elder sister had given up. She became secretary to Dr. Sun Yat-sen who was the

lol of her childhood. She had listened to his talks in the company of her father and had shared his vistas of revolutionary ideas. She lived his dreams and dreamt his life.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen was the first man to apply the balm of West to the sores of China. He used to say, "I loved medicine. I loved the healing of disease and the cutting out of evil growth, but it was not enough. The trouble lay deeper, in the very set-up of our social system. And now I have undertaken this, not very sure I can succeed."

He did succeed. He unified his country. He formed the People's National Party. He stirred the masses dozing their life in ignorance. He upset the Chinese imperialism. He set up the Republic. He was elected the First President. A mortal dare not beg for more.

Dr. Sun trusted his secretary. Miss Soong had numberings of intelligence. He knew her since a girl baby. Miss Soong wanted to make herself useful. She spared no pains. The results were encouraging. Dr. Sun used to give her a few brisk hints and then remarked, "That is what I want to say, but put it in proper words for me."

Miss Soong was more than a mere secretary. She loved the hero with passion. He was a father to her. And she would marry him. Her aim was to nurse him to a better health and prolong his life in the cause of the country. Her family was bitterly opposed. Society

scoffed at her. She had to marry in the very teeth of domestic and social opposition.

Madame Kung, the worldly wise, wrote to her : "You are guiding your course by an unknown star, a comet which flashes through the sky and then is gone." Dr. Sun was a revolutionary. Dr. Sun was an old man. His career as well as his life were shrouded in uncertainty.

Meanwhile, Miss Mei-ling Soong, still in the New World, was getting impatient, because revolutionary news about the home front were getting scantier day by day. Receiving a letter from Madame Sun, Miss Soong said to a companion, "She mentions this young military leader Chiang Kai-shek. I thought Dr. Sun had begun to depend on him, but now it seems the man is in Shanghai working as an ordinary clerk. I can't make it out."

Dr. Sun did not live long. Oldage and Revolution were the two ends at which he was burning the candle of his life. He breathed his last in 1925. His will, or statement of three essential principles, became the beacon of the People's National Party :—

I. NATIONALISM—

"National emancipation and racial equality."

II. DEMOCRACY—

"Political rights for the people."

III. SOCIALISM—

"Economic rights for the peasants and workers."

These principles have since been accepted as the constitution of the Chinese Republic. Dr. Sun is now looked upon as the archangel of Democracy in China. He is now adored as much as he was hated during his life-time. Dr. Sun Yat-sen is dead, but his spirit still marches on, "for in the to-morrow of better things, his moral force will be victorious."*

*"Sun Yat-sen and the Chinese Republic" by Paul Linebarger.

CHAPTER IV

THE BELLE OF SHANGHAI!

Miss Mei-ling, the youngest of the Soong sisters, graduated in June 1917 from Wellesley College. She was the first student from the Orient to get the twin honours of Wellesley and Durant scholarships. Also she topped in music and art, obtaining an honourable mention of Tau Zeta Epsilon sorority. Years after she was re-honoured by her *alma mater* and voted an honorary member of the class.

The educational mission completed, her thoughts turned homeward. Having gathered the wisdom of the West, she landed at Shanghai with a freight of American lore. Her knowledge was not an undigested stuff. She was not a bookish girl and had tested her facts and figures with the touchstone of reality. Her information of the West was tempered by her knowledge of the East. Like her elder sisters, she disembarked on the shores of China with a fixed mind and a set programme. She had tasted the fruits of American prosperity and knew what she wanted to do for her motherland.

A warm welcome awaited her in the International Settlement. Every family received and feasted her. She was declared to be unchanged, the same breezy brilliant

child, as she was in the days of yore, before she undertook the educational expedition to America. Miss Soong was now a belle of Shanghai. The upper circles worshipped her. Flashing in and out of colourful groups, her keen mind and telling wit won her a place everywhere. She was a glamour-girl and the handsome deacons of China glow-wormed about her.

But where was the mind of Mei-ling? Certainly not in the picnics and parties. She cherished the dreams of would-be China. Her quest for knowledge did not end in America. She had a deal to pick up. Judgelling her brain with English, she had lost touch with the Chinese. Her first idea was to master her mother tongue. So she engaged an old-fashioned classical Chinese teacher. He read a phrase and Mei-ling repeated it, giving the sing-song intonation and wing-swang movement of the body. Thus she learnt the Chinese in its native colours.

This was not enough. Learning is a means to an end. Not the end. There was a deal to be done in the way of social reform. Mei-ling would do it! She would whiten even the pitch. It was current about vice in Shanghai, "You don't have to look for it, it looks for you!" The International Settlement had long been a settlement of international vice and wickedness, mostly financed by the Japanese agents. The whole of Shanghai was infested with gambling dens and drinking booths.

Miss Mei-ling took active part in social activities.

That was the only way to come in touch with the common masses. She welcomed the opportunity of becoming a member of Child Labour Commission. In this capacity she visited workshops and factories to have a first-hand knowledge. She was elected a Secretary of the Joint Committee of the American, British and Chinese Women's Club in 1921. It was a great step towards international understanding. She was appointed a member of the National Film Censoring Commission. As such, she could voice her views effectively against the screening of immoralities. The blood of old Charlie Soong—now running the Commercial Press of Shanghai—seemed to be rising in her veins. She would change China !

Young Chiang Chung-Cheng, a Chinese of humble birth, was born on October 31, 1886 at Ningpo in the province of Chekiang. Of his childhood little is known. But we may be sure that he has always been "as clean as a stone" for his sense of duty and uprightness. He was very lucky in having an understanding mother. She was well aware of his stony character, because, at a great personal sacrifice, she sent him to Japan to get training at the Tokyo Military Academy. But for her motherly foresight, Young Chiang would never have risen above the millions of other mothers' sons in China.

When Dr. Sun Yat-sen formed the People's National Party, Young Chiang was not killing his time in idleness. Quick of actions, he knew his duty towards his mother-

land and played a brilliant role under Dr. Sun. These were successful military feats which suggested to Young Chiang Chung-Cheng to take up the name of Kai-shek which means "as clean as a stone." The name is apt.

Master Kai-shek, however, could not keep up the tempo of revolutionary activities. Out of pocket he was out of the picture. Next we hear of him working as a clerk in Shanghai to eke a living. The greatest young man of China had to succumb to the temptation of a paltry regular income! He sold his body to the flaps and the files, but his soul was not fouled by the blue-black ink.

Soon he quitted his clerical job, became an exchange broker, made a nice little fortune, married one Miss Mao from Fenghua, whom he had never seen before the wedlock, and had a son called Chiang Ching-Kuo. But his prosperity was a mere bubble. The unrest of Europe in the winter of 1920-21 spelled his downfall and he found himself short of three thousand Chinese dollars. A feeling friend paid off his debt and sent him to Dr. Sun in Canton.

Young Chiang received a hearty welcome. As head of the Whampoa Military Academy, he came into limelight again. He turned out military officer of the finest quality. Dr. Sun was delighted. A stream of soldiers became certain. The new Academy was a pillar of the Chinese Republic.

When Dr. Sun passed away in 1925, his lieutenant

did not lose heart. He was appointed the Commander-in-Chief and towards the end of 1925 waged a successful war against Chen Chiung-Ming. With the help of the Russian agent, Michael Borodin, General Kai-shek established the Government at Wuchang in 1926. But he was very impatient of the red influence and broke with the Russian domination in 1927. His efforts were to unify China and so he identified himself with the constitutional element in the *Kuomintang*, the People's National Party.

General Kai-shek wooed the widow of Dr. Sun, knowing her fire and faith in the country's cause, but he could not win her. She loved her late-lamented husband profoundly and lived for his ideals. Besides, she had too much of Russia in her and was poles apart from the ideology of the Generalissimo. The latter wanted to unify China even by playing to the tune of the capitalists. Madame Sun would not put up with any compromise. A dreamy child, she was for an all-out swift and rapid red revolution.

In spite of mental reservations, the Generalissimo continued to woo Madame Sun. He gave her a large tether and did not put any check on her movements, even though her utterances undermined the cause of the Republic. But when Madame Sun publicly denounced the policy of the Generalissimo, it ended all his hopes of ever winning her.

In his despair the lover turned his eyes towards the younger sister of Madame Sun—Miss Mei-ling Soong!

The Generalissimo had two hurdles to cross. He must get rid of his first wife and embrace Christianity before he could stand a fair chance of winning the hand of Miss Mei-ling Soong. The love he won swiftly, almost at first sight, because Miss Soong, with an eye on self-advancement, was quick to appreciate the Hero of China, with tremendous possibilities latent in the womb of time, and there was little trouble on her account. She had watched his progress eagerly, took no friend into confidence, but consulted everybody indirectly, not excluding Madame Kung, her eldest sister, who opined that this cold calculating youngman was bound to rise higher and higher. Thus she arrived at a firm decision and unfolded her mind to the Generalissimo.

The lover, however, was very cautious. He was not hasty. He must cross the hurdles first. When the journalistic circles got an inkling, he told them rudely, "Miss Soong is not the sort of lady with whom such a situation could be associated." So much so, that when he and she went to a certain place, they travelled in separate boats. But these were mere marriage manoeuvres to hoodwink the society.

Having divorced his first wife and suitable arrangements made for his son, the Generalissimo proceeded to face the bombardment of Mother Soong. The problem of first wife was soon set aside, when the document of divorce was put in her lap. But the religion? It was a different affair. She was a staunch Methodist and

would not give her daughter in marriage to a Buddhist.

"Are you prepared to become a Christian?" thundered Mother Soong.

"It would be easy to say, yes," said the young lover, "but I would rather promise that I am prepared to study it." Moreover, he argued, that Christianity was not pill that could be swallowed with a gulp of cold water.

This had the desired effect on Mother Soong. She pressed no further. The brilliant logic of the Generalissimo made her speechless. Besides, she was very wise woman and had seen the world. Chiang Kai-shek was no revolutionary like Dr. Sun Yat-sen. He was a practical soldier and had proved his mettle on the battlefield. She guessed as well as anybody else that his star was in the ascendent.

The marriage ceremony was performed sumptuously at the Majestic Hotel on December 1, 1927. It was a civil service. The pomp and show was unique. The platform was dressed up in the shape of an altar and the life-size photo of Dr. Sun Yat-sen was placed in the background. Dr. Sun, the Liberator of China, rather than Lord Christ was the presiding deity. All the elite of China were present. The guests were feasted lavishly. It was a golden moment in the chequered history of China. The sublime soul of Dr. Sun was no doubt present at the ceremony and gave away his brilliant sister-in-law to his lieutenant who was now the captain of China's destiny.

"Precious sister!" shouted Young T.V. Soong.

It was the happiest day in the life of old Charlie. He spent money with a liberal hand. The marriage was gone through royally. His bank account are supposed to have dwindled by one hundred thousand Chinese dollars.

The dreams of Old Charlie began swiftly to materialize. In 1928 the Generalissimo marched at the head of the Nanking army and occupied Peking. On October 10, 1928, he became President of the Chinese National Government with a cabinet of ten members. By 1934 the whole of China was stirred out of its bearish slumber and fairly united in its National outlook. When the flag of the Rising Sun began to advance in Manchuria, China expected every soul of its soil to do its duty. Japan was behind time and failed to feel the pulse of Chinese Nationalism.

Young Tse-ven Soong, the brother of Madame Chiang, started his career as a leader of the Y. M. C. A. Movement in China. He was appointed the President of the National Bank of China and then rose to be the Minister of Finance. He has been acknowledged as one of the greatest financial experts of the world. The heavy responsibility of financing the national war fell on him and he has the knack of collecting revenues even from the Japanese occupied territories.

Dr. H. H. Kung, the son-in-law of Old Charlie, has long been the Vice-President of the Central Executive Committee. He is also a great financier and has been darlingly Nicknamed a "Jew." When Mr. T. V. Soong left the cabinet over a ministerial issue, Madame and

Dr. Kung became the financial advisers to the Government.

Madame Chiang herself has been taking an active part on the national front. She has accompanied the Generalissimo on all his flights. With him she has passed through thick and thin. Since 1936 she has been the Secretary-General of National Aviation Commission. In this capacity she has proved her mettle. Not only she has been able to obtain a considerable number of aeroplanes from abroad, but also she has raised the efficiency of the Chinese pilots to a very high standard. Their watchword is "Quality First."

Soong heroes have risked their lives time and again on the altar of national welfare. They have flown in risky weathers to all parts of the globe as ambassadors of China. Some Soong members were in Hong Kong and actually flew over to Chungking after the Japanese occupation. Razor Tojo has made no secret of what he would do if a Soong falls in his hands. One son of Old Charlie has already been stabbed by a band of traitors.

The Soong family has exercised a very wholesome influence on the Generalissimo. His entire outlook has undergone a spiritual change. To the utmost delight of Mother Soong he adopted Christianity and was baptised by Pastor Kaung. The Chinese Christians are in the vanguard of struggle for national independence. What a sad contrast with the Christians in

India, who have not even learnt to stand on their feet and still, looking to the West, long for crutches ! Terra firms slips under their feet.

When the Commander-in-Chief of the national forces in China married the flower-like Soong girl of twenty-four, he transformed his moral background and now wields a mighty influence for the betterment of China. But for this union, the Generalissimo would have been no more than a bloody general thirsting for a brute domination of the masses. He was akin to General Franco and would have lined up with Hitlers and Mussolinis. Madame Chiang has reined his unbristled ambitions and sublimated them into noble ideals. She has linked up her husband with the race of Lincolns and Washingtons at whose fountains of knowledge she herself has drunk deep.

CHAPTER V

THE WOMAN PROTECTS THE MAN

The world was dazed by a drama of great events in December 1936. Asia was the scene of the wildest coup in years. Stage was set for a Gilbert and Sullivan Opera. So thought the American writers. It was one of the most thrilling episodes in the life of the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek. To the Madame it was the battle-ground of a mighty moral struggle. Upon this hinged the future of China. "The Generalissimo kidnapped!" It was a front-page news that started the air from coast to coast. It overshadowed any other event in the Far East. And it besmirched the history of the young republic.

The Generalissimo was waging a bitter war against the Communists. The latter had fortified themselves in the North of the country. On December 12, the Sian rebellion broke out. The Central Chinese Government was shocked. The very national existence was threatend. Before Generalissimo's second visit to Shensi, perverse ideas had already entered the minds of the North-eastern troops. Their conduct was rather wayward. The troops were retreating from the front without orders. Such reports came repeatedly.

The Generalissimo proceeded to Tunkwan from Loyang on December 4th. He received the commanders one by one. Unexpectedly a mutiny broke out. Almost under his nose. And it threatened his personal safety. He had sent the young General Huesh-liang to bring down the unruly Chinese. The troops were mostly raised from Manchuria. They were thirsting for a clash with Japan. They did not favour the idea of expending military strength on their countrymen. The soldiers were grumbling for having been shunted upon unwelcome duty. Their blood was up. They did not fight heartily. General Huesh-liang flirted and fraternized with them. The Generalissimo had come to nerve up the army. But at Sian he found himself in a trap.

On December 11th, the Generalissimo was walking in the compound. He saw two men on the Lishan Mountain. They looked at him for about ten minutes. The incident struck him as singular. Later in the day Li Tien-tsai, head of Intelligence work, paid him a visit. The call was unexpected. Li expressed his doubt regarding the wisdom of policy. He was at one with Chang Huesh-liang. His mind was poisoned. The Generalissimo gave him a bit of his own mind.

On December 12th, the Generalissimo heard gun-firing at 5-30 a. m. He sent one of his bodyguards to find out the matter, and then another. But they did not return. Lieutenant Mao sent a message that mutiny had broken out. But there was nothing

untoward behind the mountain. The Generalissimo started for the mountain at the back of the house. The eastern side door was securely locked. The key could nowhere be found. He scaled the wall. It was only about ten feet high. Not difficult to get over. But just outside the wall there was a deep moat. Its bottom was thirty feet from the top. It was still dark. The Generalissimo missed his footing and fell into the moat. He felt a bad pain. Then he was up on his feet, walking with difficulty. He made up his mind to cross the hill. The cliffs were steep. He fumbled about for a hold as he climbed. After half an hour he reached the top. Gun-firing was heard on all sides. Bullets whizzed by his body. Some of the bodyguards were hit and dropped dead. The Generalissimo retraced his steps. Half-way down the mountain he fell into a cave. It was overgrown with thorny shrubs. He was too tired to walk. So he remained there.

At nine o'clock the firing ceased. The rebels sought for him. Twice they passed the cave. But failed to find him out. The rebels were hotly arguing. They made a thorough search. At last he was picked out.

"Here is a man in civilian dress," said one. "Probably he is the Generalissimo."

"Let us first fire a shot," said another.

"Don't do that," said the third. "I am the Generalissimo!" the captive raised his voice. "Don't be disrespectful. If you regard me as your prisoner, kill me, but don't subject me to indignities," "We don't care,"

said the mutineers. They fired three shots into the air and shouted, "The Generalissimo is here!"

Sun Ming-chiu, a battalion commander, approached the captive. He was taken by car to Sian. The ground below to hill was strewn with dead bodies. He was housed in the New City Building at Sian. He rested for a while. Then appeared Chang Hsueh-liang. He was very respectful. The Generalissimo did not return his courtesies. The captor reasoned brilliantly. But the captive turned a deaf ear, "Which are you, my subordinate or my enemy?" said the Generalissimo. "If my subordinate, you should obey my orders. If you are my enemy, you should kill me without delay. You should choose either of these two steps, but say nothing more, for I will not listen to you."

"I am not alone responsible for this affair," said Chang. "There are many other people who are in the movement." "You are crazy," said the Generalissimo. "Remember that four years ago the people wanted to get hold of you and punish you, but I took the blame for you I do not know how many times. Because I took a generous protective attitude towards you, you were able to go abroad. From now on, in spite of the size of the world, where will you find a place for yourself? Living, there will be no place to put your feet; dead, there will be no place to bury your bones. You still do not realize your predicament, but I do. I am really afraid for you."

Chang's face suddenly changed colour. "Are you

still so obstinate ?” he said.

“What do you mean by ‘obstinate’ ?” retorted the Generalissimo. “I am your superior, and you are a rebel. According to Military discipline and the law of the land you, as a rebel, deserve not only reprimand, but also punishment. My head may be cut off, my body may be mutilated, but I must preserve the honour of the Chinese race and must uphold law and order. I am now in the hands of you rebels. If I allow the honour of the four hundred million people whom I represent to be degraded by accepting any demands in order to save my own life, we should lose our national existence. Do you think that by using force you can compel me to surrender to you rebels ? To-day you have lethal weapons ; I have none, but instead I am armed with the principles of righteousness. These are my weapons of defence. With these I must defend the honour of the people whom I represent and must be a faithful follower to our late leader (Dr. Sun Yat-sen). I shall do nothing to betray the trust imposed on me by the martyrs of the revolution. I shall not bring shame and dishonour to this world, to the memory of my parents and to my nation. You, young man, do you think you can make me submissive by force ? You mistake my firm stand on the principles of law and order for obstinacy. If you are a brave man, kill me ; if not, confess your sins and let me go. If you do neither, you will be in a dangerous position. Why don’t you kill me ?”

When Chang heard this, he was downcast. Remained silent. After a while he said, "Why don't you give more thought to this matter. I am going."

Then the Generalissimo gestured with his hand and said "Get out !"

Later in the day, the prisoner drew up a telegram to his wife. He handed the wire to Battalion Commander Sung and asked him to take it to Chang for dispatch. Then he put down the following golden note in his dairy:—"I know that these rebels are very dangerous people. I am determined to fight them with moral character and spiritual strength and with the principles of righteousness. When I was young I studied the classics of our sages. After I attained manhood I devoted myself to the revolutionary cause. There are many heroic deeds in our history. The martyrs of former ages always defied death. In the pages of our history we find vivid descriptions of the circumstances under which they met their death. Being a great admirer of these heroes, I prefer to follow in their footsteps instead of disgracing myself. The courageous life as taught by late Dr. Sun should be followed by us all. Unless we do this calamity will certainly overtake us. Jesus Christ was tempted by Satan and withstood him for forty days. He fought against evil influences more strongly than I do to-day. I am now, however, fighting the mutineers with ever-increasing moral strength. I must maintain the same spirit which led Jesus Christ to the cross, and I must

be ready to meet any death which mutineers may bring upon me by the so-called 'people's Judgment.' This will justify the teachings I have received from my mother and will fulfil the expectations of my comrades."

This note is heroic. It shows the signs of ever-readiness for death. It is practically the will and testament of a martyr awaiting the final blow. It is the eternal language of an immortal soul. Had the Generalissimo been put to the sword, he would have gone down the history as one of the noblest men in the world. Which indeed he is.

The shock of the news came to Madame Chiang Kai-shek like a thunderclap out of a clear sky. Various factors swiftly swung into activity. The news was broken to her by Dr. H. H. Kung, Minister of Finance. Overwhelmed with anxiety, he came to her Shanghai home. She was holding a conference. It dealt with the commission of Aeronautical Affairs. She has been the Secretary-general of Air since 1936.

"There has been a mutiny," he said, "and there is no news of the Generalissimo."

All telegraph lines with Sian were dislocated. Radi was out of order. But those who wanted news were not baffled. Rumours quickly supplied the need. Newspapers chewed them cleverly and vomitted screaming headlines. Mr. W.H. Donald flew to Sian. Madame Chiang and Dr. Kung hastened to Nanking. But Nanking was as much in the dark as Shanghai.

Madame Chiang has a great faith in Mr. W.H. Donald. He is an Australian Journalist. A trusty advisor of the Generalissimo since 1902. The Madame used to tell her husband, "There is no nonsense about that man Donald. He does not affect Chinese ways, he does not try to speak our language, he openly hates our food. But he is by nature a go-between and because of that he has a place in China where such a man is in great demand. He has sense." So here was the proper man. He was immediately posted to Sian. The official circles in Nanking were wrought up to a state of high tension. A circular telegram came from Sian. It was signed by Chang Hsueh-liang and other leading officers. They had advised the Generalissimo with tears. The charges were such as "made their hair stand on end." The singnatories set forth a group of eight demands. These were described as "points of national salvation." The Nanking authorities were begged to stoop so as to open one line of life for the future. The so-called eight proposals were :

- I. Reorganize the Nanking Government. Let other parties come in and help to save the nation.
- II. Stop all civil wars.
- III. Release all patriotic leaders.
- IV. Pardon all political offenders.
- V. Let people have the liberty of assembly.
- VI. Give a free hand to patriots.
- VII. Carry out the will of Dr. Sun Yat-sen faithfully.

VIII. Call a National Salvation Conference immediately.

Madame Chiang was brought face to face with national situation wrapped in increasing excitement. She had a grave personal interest. Nevertheless she insisted on a sane line of action being taken. The military officers desired to set the military machine forthwith into motion. But she did not favour the idea. Her strivings were for a quick, calm and bloodless settlement of the whole affair. She held stormy conferences but pleaded for coolness of head and heart. Every effort was speedily made to get at the truth. "After all," she added, "we are all Chinese—don't let's fight if we can find a way out of it." She was no doubt angered by a telegram from Chang Hsueh-liang. Then several thoughts flashed through her mind. Did Chang really sign the telegram? Was it done in an outburst of anger? Was he not having trouble with his men? She commended the Generalissimo to God.

Madame Chiang went ahead with her usual plans. Her work was vital. Activity is an escape. The death of her husband was being whispered. In her presence the people were thoughtful. Behind her back the atmosphere was heavy with pessimism. She kept aloof from shrewdness and skilled double-dealing. Sian deepened her conviction in crystal sincerity of life. She could not shake off the feeling that there was a way out of that ugly situation. She refused to launch an attack. The possibilities for a peaceful settlement

should not be cut off. Nevertheless she was running full tilt into the military mind. "She is a woman," was one taunt repeated to her, "pleading for the life of her husband."

"I am a woman," retorted Madame Chiang, "but I am not speaking as a wife trying to save her husband's life. If it is necessary that the Generalissimo should die for the good of the country I would be the first one to sacrifice him, but, to my mind, to use military force and to attack and bombard Sian would not only endanger the life of the Generalissimo who is the universally recognised leader of the country, but would also cause untold misery and suffering to thousands of innocent civilians as well as waste our military force, which should be conserved for national defence. Let us see whether or not any channels are open through which we may come to a peaceful settlement." Further she added, "Place the armies in position if you so desire, but do not fire a single shot. Meanwhile let us use every effort to secure his release. If peaceful means fail, it is not too late to use force."

She desired to fly to Sian personally. The officers sternly disagreed. Rumours were thick that blood and fire were rife at Sian. It was difficult to hold on to faith in the teeth of despair. She failed to see eye to eye with the pessimists. All plans of national betterment seemed to crash about her ears. Still she clung to faith like a baby to her mother's breast. "Faith moves mountains" sang in her soul. Wrongs can be righted

Let us only have abiding faith.

Madame Chiang's feelings were not eased by the flock of visitors. They sought news. And offered sympathy in exchange! She insisted on taking a calm view. It was time to bear in mind the teachings of the Generalissimo. The road to repentance must be kept open and channels of negotiations kept up. If the rebels repent, they should be brought back to the fold. National welfare is being endangered terribly by their actions. They must be made to see.

Everybody tendered her warm comfort in these hours of mental anguish. Silence enshrouded everything at Sian. It looked like stark tragedy. In spite of all, she held to her line of duty. December 14th brought the first real glimpse of hope. It was a telegram from Mr. Donald. The Generalissimo was well and comfortably housed. Those favouring fighting were restless. In the heat of argument there was not much time for gentleness. The next day she received a trunk call from Donald.^{*} He painted a swift picture. Chang Hsueh-liang invited her to Sian. Facts were being falsified. So she telephoned Mr. Donald not to send any telegrams for publication. This silence puzzled the Journalists. Many jumped to the conclusion that all was not well at Sian. Grossly wild rumours sprang into circulation.

Days of intense agony followed. Military forces had been already in action. She prevented any widening of gap between Nanking and Sian. On Saturday December 19th, T.V. Soong left for Sian as a private citizen.

Madame Chiang strained every nerve to delay bloodshed. T.V. and Donald came back to Nanking on December 21st. "The situation at Sian was," she reflected, "that Mr. Donald had laid the foundations, T.V. had built the walls, and it would be I who would have to put on the roof." She felt she could reason with the rebels.

The next morning Madame Chiang set off for Sain. With calm determination. With eyes wide open. But unafraid. She was running a great risk. The Loyang field was filled with bombers fully loaded for action. She followed the railway line through snow-covered mountains. Past the peaks of great masses of sparkling ice. She saw a square walled city nestling under the white hills. "There's Lintung," said Mr. Donald, "where the Generalissimo was captured." Madame Chiang's thoughts flew fast and furiously. In a moment they were circling over Sian and dived into the airfield.

Her mind was made up. She decided not to lose temper in the face of rudeness. Chang Hsueh-liang received her warmly. He looked tired and ashamed. She shook hands cordially with the rebels. And they felt greatly relieved. The car journey into the city was not strained. When she walked into her husband's room, he exclaimed, "Why have you come? You have walked into a tiger's lair." He shook his head sadly. And tears sprang to his eyes. The Generalissimo was in bed. He was suffering from a wrenched back. He was wan and ill. His limbs were cut by brambles. He looked a shadow of his former self. Madame Chiang set

about to nurse him.

"Although I urged you not to come in any circumstances to Sian," said the Generalissimo, "still I felt that I could not prevent it. I opened the Bible this morning and my eyes lit on the words: 'Jehovah will now do a new thing, and that is, he will make a woman protect a man.' "

Even in this miserable plight, the Generalissimo told his wife, "I beg you sign nothing under pressure. The nation's good must be above our personal need." Truly, the great are systematically great. They do not skin off their greatness, when it pricks into their position and purse. True greatness is the child of fearlessness wedded to faithfulness.

Madame Chiang sensed that the captors were conscious of their wrong-doings. If rightly handled, peace could be quickly made. The Generalissimo was upset emotionally. So she read the Psalms until he drifted off to quiet sleep. "Here I was in Sian once again," she writes. "Sian, the cradle of the Chinese race! I caught myself wondering if it would also be its coffin." The fate of China hanged in the balance. The nation was sorely riven. If wisdom did not prevail, Sian would be a death trap. They were hemmed in with rebels. Beyond them were the red hordes.

The Madame sent for Chang. She talked coolly, calmly and quietly. She told him that he had made a bad mess of things. Progress needs must be slow. The whole nation had to be brought up to the proper

level. Even then the results would be seemingly poor. She pointed out that she had often spent one hundred per cent of effort to get one per cent of result. "Madam," said the captor. "I know I have done wrong.!"

Chang talked to his friends the whole night through. Next day he came heavy-eyed. He was worn out and had failed to win over Yang and his man. These were days of increasing anxiety. New element of doubt raised its head. The eyes of the guards held unspoken questions. Excitement charged the whole atmosphere. The arrival of the Madame had split the camp. Meeting after meeting was upset. Chang Hsueh-liang himself stood in danger of being clapped up by other rebels. The Generalissimo was tried of shilly-shallying. The rebels talked and talked. They found great relief in letting off steam.

Christmas Eve was filled with faith and dashed hopes. Chang looked baffled and bewildered. He planned to smuggle the Generalissimo out in the last resort, Madame Chiang refused to agree. At length the rebels wanted a signed order. But the Generalissimo refused to sign anything. Everybody was pulling this string and that. Late in the evening the commanders of the city gave in and allowed them all to pass through the gates. General Hsueh-liang also accompanied the party. He said, "I have two obligations. The first, to take full responsibility for that which has happened. The second, to fulfil my duty in showing that, what has been done,

was not with a mutinous interest, nor against your personality, but to protest because you are not fighting Japan."

Chiang-Kai-shek came back a greater hero than ever. On his heels came his captor. "Full of shame I followed you to Nanking," said Chang, "to await punishment befitting in severity the degree of my crime." He called himself "a surely, unpolished, rustic and impudent lawbreaker." But Chiang was not to be outdone. He blamed himself. "Through poor leadership," said he, "I must hold myself responsible for the incident." Mr. Donald asserted in a United Press despatch that at no time was Chiang's life in danger. Except for the threat of bombing by planes sent by his own Government. Chang was given a quick trial. Sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. And promptly pardoned. The Generalissimo twice offered his resignation. The load of responsibilities was too heavy. "My health and my mind have failed me," he said, "and I have committed many errors. The resignations were of course refused.

Effects at home were clear. "The Sian rebellion has proved a great hindrance to the progress of the work of our national revolution," said the Generalissimo. "The results which had been achieved during the past eight years and which would have been crowned with the final success in a couple of weeks, or at most a month, were almost completely ruined. Inestimable damage has been done to national defence, to communications and to the economic reconstruction work

in the North West. Thus several years' effort of the Government and the people, already taking shape, was retarded. It is impossible to restore in a short space of time local peace and order and reinstate a sense of security on the money market. Generally speaking, our national progress has reverted to a condition that prevailed three years ago. It is indeed deplorable. If the rebels have any conscience, some day they will realize that their unwarranted action should not be forgiven."

Abroad the effects were lit large. Events at Sian saved the face of the Japanese Government. Matters at Tokyo had not been going well. Then Chang seized Chiang. At once the Japanese Embassy cried out, "This would never have happened if Chiang Kai-shek had accepted Japanese co-operation to suppress Communism." The Japanese Army declared to have further proof. For six months Chang had been in touch with the Soviet Union. Moscow at once denied. Russia and Japan accused each other. The Soviets only wanted a strong united China. A bulwark between them and Japan. They favoured Chiang Kai-shek in spite of his war on the Chinese Communists. Japan likewise had no part in the coup. Young Marshal Chang has been a hot hater of Japan. He was driven out of Manchuria in 1931 by the Japanese lust for a biscuit of China. Japan stood to lose if Chang had won. Equally she stood to lose by the new unity brought to China. The net effects of the affair could be easily read. The end of the anti-Communist campaign. A stiffer front towards Japan.

CHAPTER VI

SALVATION FROM WITHIN

China is shaking off its traditional shell by a mighty inner force. "Salvation from within" is the watchword of the present generation. It "does not imply a policy of isolation nor anything approaching it. It merely indicates that we have native leaderships and technique which did not exist a few years ago. The old system of haphazard philanthropy in China is slowly giving way to better economic planning framed within a thoroughly democratic state."†

The era of civil wars and banditry is, now approaching its end. China is no more a land of mystery and make-believe. Public opinion within China is now a governing factor. It deters the hasty who would rush to settle their differences with the sword.

There is a widespread recognition of economic problems which are intertwined with politics. The Government is bending its energies to give the people an efficient administration. Honesty now rules supreme where corruption has long held sway.

The New Life Movement is deeply concerned with

†A radio broadcast by Madame Chiang Kai-shek from Nanking to the United States on February 21, 1937.

the character that goes to make a nation. There is an old Chinese saying, "If you are planning for one year, sow grain; if planning for ten years, plant trees; but when planning for a hundred years, grow men." China is now being knit together into one unified hole. It was lure of greed and glory that had plunged her into domestic dolefulness. The New Life Movement stresses the duties of citizenship.

Education is the first logical step to the modernization of China. Everywhere there seems to be a quenchless thirst for knowledge. Book stores are crowded. Magazines are on the increase. Newspaper offices are bursting open all around like pop-corn. Evening classes are in full swing. Even rickshaw-pullers go a-schooling. Modern findings in hygiene and diet are eagerly sought. The radio receives fan-mail from the remotest corners of the country.

Madame Chiang is working unceasingly on plans of economic betterment. She is opening new avenues of livelihood within the framework of a constitutional system of Government. The ever-widening network of highways and byways is being pushed into the interior. The scientists under the Chinese Government are now busily classifying the untapped resources of the country.

"In the midst of all these changes," says Madame Chiang, "the New Life Movement supplies us with a spiritual life-line to hold on to, while we struggle towards a higher level of living for all our people."

The idea of New Life Movement was born in the

autumn of 1934. General Chiang was pushing on to unify China. All but two provinces were under his control. Resolutely he planned a master strategy. Hundreds of miles of military roads were built. The mountain strongholds of his native enemies were encircled. The General was certain of success. Nevertheless the Communists escaped. They marched through towering mountains across whirling waters. It dramatically displayed their courage. The General said to the Madame, "It is the spirit which our own troops need." The Madame said to the General, "One must have a conviction to be willing to live or to die like that." It was the birth of a new idea. Slowly it took shape in both the minds. The people of China must be fired with a conviction that it is worthwhile to give one's utmost to one's country. They must be made proud of their heritage. The people needed a new stimulus. China must have a new way of life. "Mei-ling!" said the General, "let us plan a New Life Movement."

The idea of N. L. M was further intensified when the Madame went on a tour of inspection through Kiangsi province. The Communists had played a havoc. Everything that could not be carried away was damaged. Death ruled the villages. The rhyme and rhythm of the Chinese hamlets could not be heard. No hawkers were crying, no children laughing, no good-natured jostling of people, no grunting of pigs at large. Not even a lean dog was in sight. "Into the open fields I hurried," says Madame Chiang Kai-shek.

I could not bear to linger in the village. But again, instead of swaying fields of golden grain, I found here a stubble of blackened roots, there a heap of broken tile, and beyond, barren wastelands as far as the eye could see" The Madame passed a village where a few old men were basking in the sun. "Where are the people of the village?" she asked. They continued to gaze in space. At last one of them answered listlessly, "The Communists have been here!" Then another long silence followed. They were loathe to speak. At length one muttered out, "Some of the people have been killed. Some were carried away. Some escaped, Heaven knows where. We were too old and weary, so we hid beneath the straw and we are left." They alone were there to tell the tale. Clearly the straw was green. Otherwise they would have been roasted alive in the bonfire on the altar of the Merciless Goddess of the Parched Earth Policy.

With renewed conviction the Madame joined her husband in his planning. Every one in China must be made careful of his own condition. And he must be proud of himself. General Chiang outlined the New Life Movement. These were its chief points:

- I. "Let us regard yesterday as a period of death, to-day as a period of life. Let us rid ourselves of old abuses and build up a new nation.
- II. "Let us accept the heavy responsibilities of serving the new nation.
- III. "Let us observe rules, have faith, honesty, and

humility.

- IV. "Let us keep our clothing, eating, living, and travelling habits simple, orderly, plain, and clean.
- V. "Let us face hardships willingly, strive for frugality.
- VI. "Let us acquire adequate knowledge and have moral integrity as citizens.
- VII. "Let our actions be courageous and rapid.
- VIII. "Let us act on our promises or, better, act without promising."

The aims were symbolized by four Chinese characters. These characters stood for time-honoured virtues. These virtues were Courtesy, Service, Honesty, and High-mindedness. The movement spread rapidly. It started on May Day with a cleanliness campaign in Nanking. By the end of 1935 it was in full swing. A movement for a nation's new life.

Madame Chiang felt a deep happiness. A group of government-trained men was sent out. They helped the people to get supplies on long-time loans. Men from sixteen years of age upwards were trained into self-defence corps. There was a broad campaign for common sense and courtesy. It was a challenge to youngmen of ability. Students pledged themselves to work for the movement in their villages. It was a serious pledge. They brought the New Life Movement within the reach of the humblest citizen.

Madame Chiang also saw other sides of the move-

ment. To many the new ideas were at first almost laughable. It was amusing to see large signs telling where one was to spit. With customary ease the people said among themselves, "It is too much trouble, all this! But it is only for a while. They cannot watch for ever, and we cannot trouble to walk half a mile to a certain spot. We have always spat where we pleased." It was unpleasant to be led publicly to a spittoon. Instead of spitting on the floor in the comfortable old way. Coolies toiled merrily under their loads balanced on poles across their shoulders. Their rhythmic walk was halted by a neatly uniformed officer. He said sternly, "Button up your jacket, and tuck up the ends of your girdle. Slovenliness is not allowed since the New Life Movement." The coolies stared in utter astonishment. Slowly they set down their loads. Their fingers shaking with weariness, they buttoned up the jacket which they had opened to let in the cooling breeze. And they tucked out of sight a dangling inch of the girdle round the waist. "The New Life Movement!" Madame Chiang heard one man say. "What is that does not allow one to open his jacket while he works, to say nothing of removing it altogether on a blistering hot day? Whose movement then, is this?" She laughed. But such incidents were only passing ones. The deadly earnestness was much more widespread. Letters poured in from places a thousand miles inland. Madame Chiang was almost buried under all that was asked of her. She worked feverishly

at top speed. Many a women, interested before in only the baby at her breast, was stirred to new loyalty.

The New Life Movement has awakened the people. Modern vitality is infused in the ancient civilization of China. It is a semi-Y.M.C.A. semi-Neo-Confucian movement. Modelled on the Salvation Army, it has made no puny strivings to cure the ills of China. The movement has shown amazing energy in the curtailment of spitting and smoking, use of tooth brushes and the wearing of simple clean clothes. It has caught the imagination of the masses. Even the traffic constables act as the guardians of public morals. India cannot be nationalized unless the Indian Police has a civic sense of duty. It would be worthwhile to give our rough and ready constables a joy-ride to Chungking or London to teach them their business.

Groups of New Life women are working untiringly in military hospitals. There is many a Florence Nightingale in China to-day. The ingrained habits of the Chinese women have been uprooted. They have been awakened to their civic sense of duty, even under a hail of bullets. Many of the elite sew winter clothes for the army. They scrub floors. And they do hard disagreeable work. There has been a brisk enlisting of women to look after refugee children. In this sphere the New Life Movement has played a distinctive role.

Madame Chiang herself is the soul of young China. She attacks and weeds the abuses with a ruthless reforming spirit. Once aware of short-comings, she is

quick to rise to the occasion. She seizes upon every opportunity to exercise her influence. Unfailingly she carries out the needful. She has an endless fund of energy. And she can use it tactfully. She has no patience with slackness, pretence, or face-saving. Her frankness and friendliness charms everybody. She is the sunshine of Chinese politics.

Madame Chiang has no taste for predigested religion served in tasty doses. "I believe," she says, "in the world seen, not the unseen." She describes her faith lengthily in one of her books:—"By nature I am not a religious person. At least, not in the common acceptance of that term. I am not by nature a mystic. I am practical minded. Mundane things have meant much to me, perhaps too much. Mundane, not material, things. I care more for a beautiful celadon vase than for costly Jewels. I am more disturbed as I traverse the crowded, dirty street of an interior city than I am by the hazards of flying with poor visibility, which my husband and I experienced the other day. Personal danger means nothing to me."

The mother of Madame Chiang lived very close to God. But the Madame herself found family prayers tiresome. Often she slipped out, because she felt herself conveniently thirsty. She had to go to churches. But she hated long sermons. To-day she is thankful for this church-going habit. It brings about a kind of balance in the mind. Mother Soong spent hours in prayer. She began before dawn. If anybody asked her

advice about anything, she would say, "I must ask God first." And nobody could hurry her. Asking God was not a matter of spending five minutes in prayfulness. It meant waiting upon God until she felt His leading. And whenever she trusted God for her decision, the undertaking unfailingly turned out well. One day she was ill and confined to bed. Japan had just begun to show her hand in Manchuria. "Mother, you're so powerful in prayer," said Madame Chiang. Why don't you pray that God will annihilate Japan—by an earthquake or something?" Mother Soong replied gravely: "When you pray or expect me to pray, don't insult God's intelligence by asking him to do something which would be unworthy even of you, a mortal!"

The answer touched the heart of the child beyond the description of words. This is exactly the philosophy of the Orient. Its silken thread runs throughout the length and breadth of India. Madame Chiang is influenced by the inner spirituality of her mother. She is religious without being religionist. Suffering has taught her a deal. She has passed through deep waters in the Chinese chaos. The lopping off of the richest provinces has weighed on her mind. She has realized the limits of human powers. At one time she would work ceaselessly to make China strong. She had the best of intentions. But something was lacking. There was no staying power. She was depending on self. "To try to do anything for the country," she felt, "seemed like

trying to put out a great conflagration with a cup of water." She was plunged into dark despair. A terrible depression settled on her. It was a spiritual blackness. When her mother died, the blackness was deepest. A foreign foe was on Chinese soil in the north. A political faction in the South. Famine in the northwest. Floods threatening the Yangtze valley. And her beloved mother was taken. What was left? She felt the futility of life. Sometimes she would say to herself: "What if we do achieve a strong, unified country? In the sum total of things what does it amount to? As surely as a country rises to its zenith, so surely does it decline!"

Then the light dawned on her. She was spiritually failing her husband. She was letting him head towards a mirage when she knew of the oasis. Life was all at sea. She had been in the depths of despair. She was driven back to her mother's God. In helping the General spiritually, she grew spiritually herself. She made up her mind to do, not her will, but God's. Life is really simple. It is twisted into knots by us. The will of God is like a flower. Politics is full of falsity. There is no better weapon than truth, Solomon asked God for wisdom, not wealth. God speaks in prayer, Prayer brings true wisdom. Wisdom brings true wealth. We have to use our minds as well as our hearts. The road to Hell is paved with good intentions. God alone knows the path. Prayer is like tuning in on the radio. How is it done? As Brother

Lawrence told us long ago, "by practising the presence of God." Madame Chiang feels that God has given her a work to do for China.

The business of the General, as Madame Chiang states, "for 99.9 per cent of his time, is to practise, not preach." He has a practical view of life which he calls "A Philosophy of Action." Under this title a booklet has been brought out by the Chinese Information Bureau. His practicability, however, is not in the western fashion. Action is not mere activity. It is not simply an up and down, to and fro, within and without. shaking of the limbs, and burning of the grey matter in the brain. "What I call the philosophy of life," says the General, "permits of no distinction between motion and repose, a distinction which is superficial." It is so. He further states that "repose can have a positive function." Exactly so. Rhythm and repose dance together. They build up the cells of the body. Madame Chiang beautifully brings out the kinship of rhythm and repose. She says, "A suitable image would be that of the spinning top or gyroscope, which achieves equilibrium by virtue of the very speed of its rotation, attains in fact a repose which in the case of the top is colloquially, so quaintly, but forcibly described as its sleeping."

Thus the philosophy of Madame and General Chiang has the nearest approach to the teachings of Bhagvad Gita. Thus spoke Lord Krishna, "I am always in sleepless, ceaseless action." True the heart of China is one

with India. Buddhism and Hinduism are the twins of our mother philosophy. Their sister Christianity likewise shared their cradle. Confucius, Goethe, Carlyle, Tolstoy, Emerson are as much Hindus as they are Chinese, German, British, Russian and American.

CHAPTER VII

ADVANCE OF THE RISING SUN

As the flag of the Rising Sun advanced westward, China flamed with protest. In the strong light of the immediate matters, everything else faded in the background. Tokyo often sought a way to save face. It pretended "to prevent war and to hold Japan's lifeline on the continent." In 1935 birth rate in Japan was the highest in the world. It was an almost brazen defiance of time.

Japan wanted an outright anti-Soviet alliance. The infiltration of the Chinese Army by Japanese officers. Chiang Kai-shek could not pocket this insult. It became difficult to read signs in the Far East. China refused to sign on the dotted line on presentation of demands by Japan. A series of anti-Japanese "incidents" took place. The public opinion in Japan remained unstirred. There was little stomach here for China adventuring. All projects carrying the army brand had a dubious flavour. Madame Chiang Kai-shek voiced across the oceans that Japan was betraying the public opinion. Japan was engaging in a full-fledged war and keeping her people in the dark.

Assassination and kidnapping came to stay in China. Events at Sian saved the face of the Hirota government.

There was a ring of sincerity in Chang Hsueh-liang's appeal for a united China to resist Japan. The course of events swung even closer to the point where the clash of interests would have to be settled by force of arms. America retired from the Orient. She did not want to get her fingers caught in the closing "door" of China. All the appeals of Madame Chiang Kai-shek fell on deaf ears. Uncle Sam cast regretful backward glances at the Philippines and tripped over Guam. Washington was forced to about-wheel after a century of forward march. Orient-bound America was home-bound. The Japanese Government flatly invited the other powers to leave China to Japan. And there was no serious protest from any quarter.

Japan found the path to peace less to her liking than the road to war. She could not obtain unlimited raw materials through channels of peace. The Russo-Japanese war practically bankrupted the Government. The World War I cost the European victors staggering amounts. But Japan reasoned otherwise. She chose between peace with poverty and war with prosperity. So Japan was in a warlike mood.

Unequal treaties shocked Japan. It was only in 1899 that extra-territoriality was abolished in Japan. Not until 1911 did she win complete independence from foreign hand in her tariff. No matter how much she patterned herself after the West, she was not accepted as an equal. These wounds to her pride were rubbed with salt by the "colour bar" in Anglo-Saxon countries.

So the Japanese relished in slapping America's face by tearing up the Nine-Power Treaty. She showed her further contempt by marching out of the League of Nations. In the Far East the white nations were spineless. Japan's word was law. No one had better try to disobey it.

In China the ten-year civil war ended in 1937. The Kuomintang voted for peace with the Communists Chou En-lai, vice-chairman of the Chinese Soviet government, declared that his party was ready to set up in harmony with the Nanking authorities. Now they were equally willing to call their forces the "revolutionary army" instead of the "Red army". In turn they asked for national unity and defence against Japan. The Government was back in control of Sian General Yang Fu-cheng made a speech in which he said that "all officials in Shensi will abide by the central government's orders." Chang Hsueh-liang, who kidnapped the Generalissimo, was completely forgiven. His full civil rights restored. Meanwhile his men were mingling freely with the Red troops. Madame Chian Kai-shek was busy clarifying the position of her country. She accepted an invitation to attend Mount Holyoke centennial celebrations in May 1937. She was to deliver an address and receive an honorary degree.

To U. S. A. the Orient was never a fact. But only a dream. Her interest has been cultural. Never practical. Shadows over China produced no ripple in America. The American dudes wore plug hats, be

cause chilly Chinese upper-class people had to have fur-lined robes against the winter. Those were the two paws of the fur trade. Otherwise, Uncle Sam did not feel politically charmed. To most Americans Philippines may as well be nuts. China may be spelled "dishes." Guam is perhaps something odd to eat.

Look at this from the angle of Japan. America had sea-lanes of trade and travel to the Orient. The map is the cold corrective of wandering fancy. Ships went on the great circle route that skirts below the fog-dripping Aleutian Islands. Look at San Francisco—Honolulu—Guam—Manila. American ships went right smack through those island-studded waters "mandated" to Japan. Her vital commerce, eastbound, steamed between the out-stretched arms of Uncle Sam. Arms sometimes end in fists. Hawaii is "the crossroads of the Pacific." Yes, indeed, also Pineappleopolis. Both phrases imply trade. The general layout of defence for the West Coast of America called for fortifications. They must reach out to the far-flung and fog-wrapped and winter-bound Aleutians.

The go-abroad-and-get-it magnate of Japan was ill at ease. Japanese restlessness was front-paging the world over. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek has never been the real dictator of China. The framework of government there is from bottom to top. The authority of the central government is very weak. Japan, on the other hand, is closely-knitted. Tokyo mistook Chinese democracy for Chinese weakness. It failed to judge

aright the Chinese gentry, the backbone of the nation. Local rulers of China have their fingers in every part of China acted and spoke with growing boldness.

In Japan the new Premier Prince Konoe, and his cabinet worked electrically. They hatched an economic plan at a high speed. It tended towards the "semi-warlike basis." The army and the navy demand this. At the same time, they appointed some members of the Diet as vice-ministers. This was a sop to the civilian politicians. The trade balance ran heavily against Japan. In 1936—38 it was the worst since the earthquake of 1923. Prince Konoe called for tripling productive power within six years. The military activities were getting the lion's share of attention from the Japanese public. "Westward Expansion" caught popular fancy. Russian Far East was highly fortified. It behooved Japan to tread warily in dealing with Moscow. Tokyo avidly seized upon gains in China. It did not mind infringing the protective folds of the Union Jack. The spearhead of the Japanese drive was Hong Kong as well as Nanking. Siam was also within Tokyo's expanding orbit. Japan was also panting to grasp Singapore and Rangoon. British fortifications bespoke of London's attitude better than could any notes issued by Downing Street. Singapore was a vital link with the mother country. The Dutch built as large a navy as their purse permitted. Most of them relied on the British. London did not want the Rising Sun to fly over soil only twenty minutes by air

from its "Gibraltar of the East." Friction between the two island empires of Britain and Japan has been growing acute since 1936. It did not arise over any South Seas question. It was the clash of economic interest in the markets of China.

The outlook in the Orient grew darker. Japan seemed bent on seizing North China. Peiping was forthwith cleared of Chinese troops. A puppet government was set up. Tientsin was ruthlessly bombed. The consulate of the Soviet Union was raided. All its documents stolen. The Japanese promptly denied responsibility. Hostilities broke out on a magic day. It was the Seventh Day of the Seventh Month of the Seventh Year in the thirties of the twentieth century. On such an occult day the first shot was fired across the Mares Polo Bridge outside of Peiping.

The Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek talked stoutly of war to the bitter end. The Japanese scouting planes made wide-ranging flights. Tokyo wanted to keep a firm hold on the whole front. Danger zone was bluntly defined as "north of the Yellow River." Japan wanted that China must join hands with her in driving out Communism. The Japanese Diet met for home affairs. But faced with the crisis in China, it did all the listening and cheering the progress of the Japanese arms. The nation flamed with patriotism. It was already bowed down with military costs. Yet it did not reckon the expense of another drive. New taxes loomed large. The Tokyo stock market slumped.

Throughout China the purge went on with fury. "There is not the slightest doubt," declared Madame Sun Yat-sen, "that we shall overcome the present crisis and successfully repel every foreign invasion." Her younger sister Madame Chiang Kai-shek busied herself in appeals to London and Washington. The warlord-led army of Japan must be halted. Its action goaded even the most mild-mannered Chinese into a desire for immediate resistance. They learnt to fight in pairs and trios. Japan launched upon a blind and terrible adventure. Tragic months followed. Fire and bloodshed swept over China. Japan's army was brought to a standstill by typhoons. Then it got into action at Shanghai. Frightened Chinese swarmed into foreign districts. The Japanese gunboats sped down the Yangtze and anchored off Shanghai.

China rushed great number of her troops to the front. All agreements were torn to pieces by Japan. Her fleet at Shanghai was alarmingly large. Chinese war-planes flew over the city. Japanese-owned mills were bombed. But the pilots proved bad marksmen. Fighting spread over a front of thirty miles. It was a glaring violation of peace. China was duty bound to defend her fatherland. Prince Konoe declared that Japan wanted to "punish China in a positive manner" and that "our final objective must be Sino-Japanese co-operation."

On August 26, 1937, the Japanese machine-gunned a British official. It was a blunder as bad as bloody. Pro-

tests from London fell flat on Tokyo. The latter wanted to make the international aspect vexing. Britain's note of protest was strongly phrased, but it was not backed by steel and fire. Dr. H.H. Kung, the Chinese Finance Minister, sped from capital to capital in Europe. He arranged for a British loan of twenty million pounds and a French loan of four hundred thousand francs. He also got credit from Swiss and Dutch banks. There was a rapid drop on the Tokyo stock exchange. The Japanese budget was already up to two million yen.

Chiang Kai-shek openly called upon foreign powers to intervene "not only for China's sake but for international safety." Nobody came forward to burn his fingers in the Far East. Japan must have her place in the sun. The Japanese plan for China proceeded smoothly. It has long been ready in paper perfection. Her oil-burning navy and a motorized cavalry won startling success..

CHAPTER VIII

CHINA HITS BACK

Russia was the first to step into the cockpit of China. Its agents saw a golden opportunity in the rags of the Manchu Empire. Moreover, there was a deep kinship between the economic conditions of the mute masses in China and Russia. Dr. Sun Yat-sen, the founder of the People's National Party, was out and out a Communist in his political outlook. He yearned for a wholesale revolution and was too much of a Russia to be Chinese. He was disliked by the most powerful sections of his countrymen and did not win their unstinted admiration until he breathed his last. Then he was worshipped as a hero and the bridle of his revolutionary policy fell to the lot of Madame Sun.

The Tokyo-trained Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek had tender feelings for the Japanese policy. He was an anti-Communist. When he came into power, the Russian influence dwindled. He carried out a swift civil war and nipped the Soviet influence in the bud. Even his own son Master Ching Chiang-Kuo broke away from his father and went over to Moscow. So did Madame Sun, his sister-in-law. He had to be kidnapped to be brought to his senses. But even then his eyes were not opened. He did not realize his mistake until he saw the

Rising Sun stampeding on the liver and life of China.

Madame Chiang had long nursed an emotinal bitterness towards Communists. When Freda Utlay told her that the Communists were the last corrupt, she retorted, "Incorrupt, yes ; but that's because they haven't got power yet."* There is certainly much truth in this remark and Madam Ching is obviously, unlike her sister, Madame Sun, a political realist. But her hatred of those who fought against her husband so long obscured her political judgment.

With the Japanese invasion of the Chinese soil, the pendulum of influence has again shifted to the other side of the Great Wall. China is now decidedly pro-Russian and has been receiving a substantial help from the Communists. Mascow has sent and is still sending more bread and bullets to Chungking than London or Washington. Russia has been long the backbone of the Chinese stern opposition to the Japanese demands. But China's acceptance of Russia's hand of friendship is tempered with judgment and foresight. There are no signs that China would ever don the Russian Bear's cloak.

Since the entry of Japan into the global war, Americo-Chinese bonds of friendship have also been strengthened. Before the occupation of Burma, hopes of the world were pinned on A.B.C.D. (American, British, Chinese Dutch) opposition to the growing power of the Rising Sun. Since the Japanese hordes overran

*Madame Chiang by Freda Utlar, "Asia" Vol. 1939, p. 405.

Burma, Chung-King is the nearest stepping-stone to the heart of Japan. That is why the Yankee interest in China is multiplying by leaps and bounds. The British have also kept up a regular stream of supplies flown direct from Calcutta to Chungking. The idea of attacking Tokyo direct is greatly appreciated rather than tearing the Japanese Empire limb by limb.

Madame Chiang has declared recently what may be looked upon as the foreign policy of the Chinese Republic:—

“Chicago, March 21, 1943.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek said on Saturday that China would welcome Russia as an ally and all other people holding human freedom as the goal. China's most pressing need is planes, more planes, she added. —Reuter.

No other country has won unstinted support of America as the young Chinese Republic. Not even Great Britain. Uncle Sam still looks at John Bull through coloured glasses, but his treatment towards his Chinese nephew is indeed grandmotherly. America is determined to see China through the yellow fever. Since the bombing of Pearl Harbour, the very wicket for Japanese infiltration has been closed down, and American ports have opened wide to the Chinese influence.

Neither Churchill nor Mahatma Gandhi is so popular with the American people as Madame Chiang Kai-shek. She is quite at home with the Yankee masses. Her personality is an embodiment of most dynamic Chinese

propaganda. While she lives, China needs no ambassador in the New World. She skips from capital to capital and stereotypes the Chinese message on the minds of mothers, with babes dangling in their arms, who are reminded of child-bombed mothers and mother-bombed children beyond the Pacific.

Madame Chiang is always a welcome guest at the White House. She is as affectionate as a daughter to the President Roosevelt. His wife receives her with open arms. The President is ready to render her all the help he can, without offending the whims of ring-leaders in his party. America is after all under the thumb of the material giants, who have long been supplying Japan, through the back-door, with guns and butter to feather their own nests.

When Japan raped the virgin soil of China, she had already blinded the American capitalistic regime with the lure of gold. China knocked in vain at the door of U.S.A. Her cries were lost in the jingle of dollars in New York. It took Madame Chiang years of sleepless toil to get a hearing from the dollar-kings of America. But her toils have been fully rewarded. Japan has failed to conquer even the body of China, but China has conquered the very heart of America.

Madame Chiang delivered an impressive speech at Los Angeles on April 5, 1943. She vented her innermost feeling at a citizens' mass meeting in the famous Hollywood bowl.

Madame Chiang Kai-shek stated that the heroism of the sorely tried people of China could not be suffi-

ently appreciated. In all their sufferings, never did they complain against their leaders. Never did they falter in their determination that the enemy must be driven from their shores.

She continue : " They had faith, too, that in the end America and other Democratic Powers would realise that it was not only for ourselves we were fighting ; and that by continuing to engage the enemy, we were giving time to the Democracies to prepare their defences. Here I should like to say that neither the present generation nor posterity can deprive an unerring tribute to the foresight and statesmanship of President Roosevelt when he envisaged the full implications and consequences of the struggle of right against might and took decisive measures to enable America to become the arsenal of the democracies,

" History and posterity will panegyryze your president's unswerving convictions and his moral courage to implement them. We take pride in the fact that amid all the stern and never-ending demands of war, we are preparing for a just and permanent peace and for the strenuous world-building that lies before us. You, too, are taking similar steps and, like us, you are as determined to contribute your share in the organisation of a new and happier social order as you are in prosecuting the war. "

She summed up her political philosophy majestically and unforgettably in the following words : " We shall not abrade the sharp, stony path we must travel before

our common victory is won. But like you and other United Nations, we shall see to it that the Four Freedoms, will not assume a placid status of ethical postulates, no matter how belated may be the final victory. We shall not be cozened of an equitable peace. We shall not permit aggression to raise its Satanic head and threaten man's greatest heritage—life, liberty and pursuit of happiness for all peoples."

Chungking is a city of magic, built by Aladdin's Lamp almost overnight, in the very heart of China. It has sprung out of the barren mountains infested by the dens of bandits and outlaws. It has no Maginot Line and yet the daredevils of Japan have found it invincible. Chungking is surrounded by mountain ranges that seem to hold the protection of winter haze as in a bowl, but on clear days those sentinel peaks are disconcertingly close. From the irregular circle against the sunset and dusk the flare and sound of anti-aircraft batteries tell that bombers have come.

When the bombing season sets in, only vital elements of the population are allowed to stay in. All people innocent of active warfare are taken out of the first ten kilometers to comparative safety. Buses are jammed with out-going passengers and even the army trucks are commandeered for civil purposes. The private cars of Generalissimo and Madame Chiang likewise carry loads of ladies and children out of the danger zone.

Chungking is honey-combed with rock shelters

against air-raids and ringed with hastily-built barracks and hospitals. Within and without, it is a city of moral miracles. This war-town maintains about 50,000 students whose lessons are not disturbed by bombs, bullets or breadlessness. "On one point," said Madame Chiang, "I am adamant. Perhaps, I am considered undiplomatic. But I do not believe in mixing politics and education." The students are not permitted to spend their vitality in political bickerings. Their proper sphere is to be taught and trained for the morrow.

The fair sex takes a fair part in the defence of the city. Many a "Mother of the Guerillas" like Madame Chao, abide within its walls. On the Hospital front, there is no scarcity of Florence Nightingales in China. Madame Chiang also sews winter garments for refugees and wounded soldiers. The ladies of China have shaken off their tender motherliness and now use swords instead of spoons in their day-to-day existence. Madame Chiang herself can use a revolver with dexterity. On one occasion, when the Japanese were perilously close, she declared, "I would prefer death to the fate of women who fall in the hands of bandits." Soldiers are nerved by her dauntless example to fight on and on. Always out of the political quagmire she is the idol of the Chinese soldiers and statesmen.

The Generalissimo himself leads a very simple life. As simple as Mahatma Gandhi. An American roll-top desk and a wall-map is all the furniture of his house. He never drinks, rarely smokes or even takes tea. From

this chimney corner he plays a mighty game on the chess-board of China. He has Tolstoyan Christianity, but nurses no sympathy for weak-kneed sons of China. He is a Tory at heart, Rightist by instinct, and a Fascist by the sword. When the Japanese were at the approaches of Wuchang, it was desired that the machinery and operatives of the largest cotton mills should be removed to the interior of China. Madama Chiang went at five o'clock in the morning and shamed the directors with patriotism, but all arguments fell flat. Then the Generalissimo ordered the mill-owner to "move or be blown up." It had the desired effect.

Brute force and moral courage are the twin brother of a just warfare, but it is the latter rather the former which has baffled the suicide squads of Razor Tojo. The Japanese hordes have swept over the steel-girdled Hong Kong, but they have failed to break through the wooden defences of Chungking.

China is bruised and battered, but miraculously on legs, growing firmer than ever. Having exchanged a round after round with Japan, she is still breathing smoothly. The general attitude of the Chinese people is imbued with realism. Japan has failed to find a crack-up in the controlling group about General Chiang Kai-shek. Madame Chiang herself, with her close-packed trips, is engaged in front-line activities. She is an awakener, a real eye-opener for the united Nations. Things against Japan are being "added up" in a clearly-limned picture. "Japan has proved the

great long-awaited instrument of Chinese unity.”*

Nanking represented the low ebb of Chinese fortunes, but the destruction of Chinese wealth about Shanghai spelled the end of any immediate peace. China's "scorched earth" policy wiped out millions upon millions of dollars' worth of industrial plant. Thereby they put out the very dying embers of a desire for peace.

Hong Kong has long been "the cash box and business office of Chinese national resistance." That place of pride is now occupied, perhaps, by Calcutta. Dr. T.V. Soong, Harvard-educated, former Finance Minister of China, has long been a wizard of financing the war. Like a new broom, he can sweep out the debris, and sweep in good new materials.

Madame Sun Yat-sen has always been sweet, beautiful, retiring, but Leftist-inclined. She sensed the situation long before Japan leapt into the cockpit of China. She holds as staunchly as ever to her ideals of United Front. Burying her differences, she voiced a conviction that nothing should be allowed to blur the firm outlines of a policy of united resistance.

No doubt, the Chinese have not been able to cut out the human tendency of acute frictions. They are conscious of many things that stick into them day and night like thorns. In spite of self-seeking, they see in the Generalissimo a symbol of united China. They bury the hatchet on points of vital nationalism.

*"Asia " 1938, p. 404.

It is a fashion to think of Chiang Kai-shek as a dictator, a man of blood and iron. But such a view is beyond the truth. He has many hurdles to cross to get the national machine into action. China is a land of compromise. Chiang is a man agile in keeping on the side of the majority and in keeping the majority on his side. He chooses evolutionary means, not revolutionary, in keeping with certain elemental tendencies in the Chinese make-up. It is here where Madame Chiang is extremely useful to the nation. She feels the pulse of the people and tenders a practical advice.

Thus the Madame has prevented the upbuilding of an opposition. The Generalissimo has often been accused of favouritism towards his kith and kin, but the men whom he has installed in high places, he has also subjected them to microscopic criticism and schooled them into realization of responsibilities. The outcome is that the Chinese Republic is the government of a family and the family of a government. "All for one and one for all" is the watchword and the battle-cry of young China.

Japan has caught a Tartar in China, just as Germany has attacked the Russian Bear in his den. It is a match between the hammer and the anvil, the drum-stick and the drum. Japan can worry, wound and work China into frenzy, but she cannot wipe it out of existence. China is too big a monster for the Japanese war-lords.

China's fight, like Russia's, is a battle for time. In

he long run, the top-heavy Japan is bound to be crushed by its own weight. Madame Sun Yat-sen voiced her views forcibly and prophetically on the eve of the Japanese invasion that China cannot be beaten to her knees.

A journalist picturesquely describes Japan's joy-ride to self-annihilation. Japan is like a new motor-car with a splendid engine. She is trying to cross the Gobi Desert. Here is a fascinating contest between the engine and the sand. "Is the desert going to destroy the car, or the car going to destroy the desert?"† It is presumed that the car has a limited quantity of gasoline at the outset of the journey. The Japanese machine labours along, but one inevitable day it will be stalled for sheer lack of fuel, a sorry affair, with smeared mudguards and a broken shaft, and an engine without grease. The British and American,—American rather than the British,—trucks will be called upon to pull it back to the point where it began its foolhardy journey.

The trouble has always been throughout the enactment of the "China incident"—or rather an accident—that Uncle Sam could not resist the temptation of selling petrol for the Japanese death-dealing car. Since the drama of the Pearl Harbour, Uncle Sam is a sadder and a wiser man. Madame Chiang Kai-shek trusts that her uncle will not in future be hoodwinked into a deal with the reckless fence-breaking party.

Since Japanese's headlong plunge in the global over

† "Asia" 1939, p. 174.

China goes stronger than ever. The Japanese butchery has ceased to be a mere incident. Now the future of Chungking is linked with that of Moscow, London and Washington. The Chinese Republic is bound to swim to the top, even though not by her own weight. The lion's share of this credit goes to Madame Chiang Kai-shek who is the glorious winged-messenger of China's foreign policy.

CHAPTER IX

ON THE EDUCATIONAL FRONT

Education in Free China is one of the most colourful stories of modern times. The great westward migration of China's universities is a thrilling event in history. It shows the iron determination of the New China that neither bomb-shells nor cannon-balls will disturb the flowering of China's future generations.

On November 14, 1928, a school was founded in Nanking for children of the Chinese Revolution. This school was right in the heart of Chung-Shan Memorial Park, and in the protective shelter of Dr. Sun Yat-sen's tomb. Madame Chiang Kai-shek put her heart and soul in the work of the school. This school was started for the education of the children whose fathers had been killed in the National Revolution. The families of these fallen heroes had been pensioned. But that was not enough. The Government must be father to the children.

Tan Yen-Kai, the noted Han-lin scholar and a great-hearted soul, was chairman of the Government Committee for education. He turned to Madame Chiang and said, "We are ready to give you our moral support, but you will have to take charge of the work!" Perhaps it sounds easy to say: "Go ahead, we will have a school

for the children of the revolutionaries! But things did not come to pass that way. Back of the real success that is China's to-day, great difficulties had to be mastered. In the first place there was no money for such a project. Madame Chiang had to find sources of Government revenue and to pigeon-hole these amounts for the school. She was helped by the officials and private individuals whose imagination was fired by the opportunity of doing something solid for the country. Suffice it to say that in seven months' time, she was able to secure an endowment of a half-million dollars

Then there was another difficulty. The children of the revolutionaries were all over China. They were in Canton and Manchuria, in Hunan and Fukien, in Yunnan and even Sinkiang. When application blanks were sent out to the families of the fallen, no one came. There was to be no cost for the education of the child, but he was to remain in the custody of the school from start to finish. Most of them would be far from home throughout. Few families could bear the pangs of separation. "So for several months," says Madame Chiang, "there was more staff than pupils." But this phase was short-lived. Shortly after, even well-to-do people wanted to send their children and pay for their board and books. Of course, none of these were accepted. Anyhow, they had many thousand more applicants than they could possibly admit.

One more problem loomed large. It was a psychological one and of vital national importance. The students

must not be allowed to feel that they were getting something for nothing. The students should feel their right to be there. Their fathers had died that China might live. The school was theirs. But over and over again when Madame Chiang talked to the students, she said something like this: "Your fathers died for our country, The Government owes you a debt. But it is equally true that the Government is in debt to hundreds of thousands of others who are not here. You are the favoured few. Therefore, you must do something in turn to repay the Government for the opportunity which it has given you. You must justify your being here!" It was earnestly desired that the students should not be educated in such a manner that they would sap the life of the country. The school-going population should not be a white-collared army that would feel that the world owed them a living.

To this end the school was organized on the industrial plan. The value of learning a trade was pointed out. The students were given an understanding of better methods of farming. They were taught to help in the life of the community. They had to go back and share new knowledge with the tillers of the soil. The school had two farms. One was a model farm with all the modern machinery. The other was subdivided into small fields to be worked by hand labour. The underlying idea was clear. The boys should know the most modern methods of agriculture. At the same time they should not think that nothing could be done

on the small parcel of land. The boys of the school were raising vegetables and fruits for market in Nanking. Their dairy was the best in the city and the demand for milk was greater than the supply. There was also a nursery garden and the older boys did landscape gardening for people in the city.

"I have my own theories of education," says Madame Chiang Kai-shek. "I have had opportunity to put them to the test. I have corrected some and learned others. But I am still convinced that we must train not only the head, but the heart and hand as well. Our students need a better understanding of life and higher standards of living, but not beyond the practical. They must not be educated to be discontented with the life to which they will return. They must not come to feel that school alone is life. I want them to help build the right type of social structure. I want them to be able to integrate the virtues of old China with the vigour and intensity of purpose needed to reconstruct a better modern China. We make earnest efforts, too, to train the teachers, so that they may enter into the real spirit of the school. We follow the cottage system, too, or more teachers occupying a cottage with thirty or forty boys. It means practically twenty-four hours a day on duty. But we are continually impressing on our teachers that they are in *loco parentis*. To make good they must enter into the spirit of the place. On one point I am adamant. Perhaps I am considered undiplomatic. But

I do not believe in mixing politics with education. At one time many applicants expected to be appointed because of influential recommendations. I decided that regardless of who recommended, teachers would be accepted only on their qualifications. Either the Dean or I have a personal interview with every teacher considered, and every teacher is put on probation for one semester. He or she must make good, for reputations and recommendations cannot run a school."

After the commencement of the Sino-Japanese hostilities, the schools were forced to suspend. The school premises were made base hospitals for wounded soldiers, where the older students remained to serve. Younger students were either returned to their guardians or transferred to schools in the interior. The libraries and laboratory equipment were contributed to the Hunan University and Hunan Bureau of Education respectively. The cattle, hogs, and poultry, parts of the famous school dairy, were moved to Changsha before the fall of Nanking and later to Changtu.

Since the westward advance of the Rising Sun, the problem of Chinese "warphans," or war orphans, has come into the forefront. This war is covering a tremendous territory. Refugees are being driven from areas over hundreds of thousands of square miles. The children have to be collected throughout the length and breadth of this vast region. They are taken to centres where they are washed and cleaned. Then

they are passed on to various institutions in the rear. Oftentimes the children are gathered from the roadsides in districts which have been bombed. They are deserted by families fleeing from war areas. They have to traverse great distances. Even fairly well-to-do people, starting on the long trek, have to give up children to the mercy of God. In every province in the rear there are orphan homes. The workers are all volunteers. Thus overhead expenses are cut to the bone.

There is a National Committee which looks after the refugee children. Every cent goes directly to the funds used for the care of little kiddies. The cost for housing, clothing and educating each child has been worked out at sixty Chinese dollars or twenty U.S.A. dollars per year. The first batch of refugee children consisted of five hundred odd. Thousands and thousands have been picked up since then. The first task is to find out which children are true orphans and which are foundlings. In the hustle and bustle of war the latter have lost contact with their parents. Efforts are made to restore the foundlings to their families. In many cases parents send their children to be taken care of by the refugee centres as they have no means of feeding them. Otherwise they would die of hunger. Such children are taken in on condition that the parents sign a paper stating that they wish the refugee centre to raise the children to prevent them being abandoned. The name, record, and history of the

child are registered.

There are altogether five war zones. In every zone there are receiving centres. Catholic and Protestant missions in all localities give continuous help. Upon arrival the children are washed and dressed in clean clothing. Each one undergoes a physical examination. Each child is given a number and a tag. Most of the children are found to be in good health. Their ages range from three to fourteen years. Many newly born babies are also being looked after. The children collected are mostly boys. There are very few girls found.

The children are taught what is termed "war-time education." It consists of written characters, the three R's, and the ABC of patriotism. Only the children under eight years of age have all the work done for them. Those above eight must wash their own clothes. Keep their rooms orderly, and help in other everyday duties. From sixth grades on, the boys learn a technical trade. They step up from one phase of training to another. They begin by learning to be callboys, telephone boys, Junior Secretaries, etc. For the older ones there are trades. They have carpentry and towel making. There is basket weaving and a small cannery to take care of surplus fruits and vegetables. Each student goes through a number of trades. He learns three trades fully. Thus he can choose the one best suited to his ability and interest.

It is possible that many of the children will have to be kept in orphanages until they grow up. It is hoped

that they will be distributed among Chinese families in various parts of the country soon after the war. "But when will hostilities cease?" says Madame Chiang Kai-shek. "And when they do cease, what will be the condition of the country? Will there be sufficient families well enough off properly to care for additional members of their families? The whole social system will be shaken from its foundation, and it will be a long time for those foundations to be re-established. When this aspect of war is considered, it may be realized what are the terrible consequences of the widespread devastation and demolition being systematically carried out by the Japanese. That problem has a great bearing on the future of the refugees. The refugees are people who have been driven by war out of the regions where their ancestors have lived and died. And when the war is over, they expect, as is their right, to return and re-occupy those lands and what is left of their homes. Is there not an international body that is going to see to it that gigantic robbery of the type now being instituted is prevented. If not, we do not know, what will become of the millions of refugees who will have been thus deprived of their possessions."

The colleges and universities in China are also governed by wartime conditions. There is a wholesale removal of libraries and equipment from the path of the invader. It is a symbol of China's stern attitude towards the tough tasks that lie before her.

China has been thrillingly successful in keeping up

her rapidly growing system of education. Most of her pre-war colleges are still working thousands of miles away from the foundation. New schools and universities have also been founded. It is remarkable that the Chinese Government has refused to recruit students. The future of China has not to be sacrificed on the altar of the goddess of war. There is no more mass illiteracy in China. On the other hand, a highly cultured class has come into being. The Chinese students are extremely shrewd and quick to cope with the knottiest problems of war. In the olden days the scholar was a man apart. He wore his finger nails exceptionally long. It showed he did no work by hand. Now this idea has been entirely weeded out. The Chinese student of to-day relishes manual work.

The educational progress in the past was stultified by other reasons too. There was the ideographic form of writing. But the Chinese went abroad. He saw what the West was doing. The impact of the Western world made itself felt. China was threatened to be left intellectually far behind. The Chinese outlook on education began a change. War against ignorance was as strongly as war against Japan. New system has reduced Chinese writing to 1,000 characters. It is now able for a grown up man to read and write in months. The curriculum in schools has been enriched by the addition of such subjects as foreign languages, science, higher mathematics and world

Education is compulsory in theory. Under war conditions the principle is difficult to enforce. The shortage of schools and necessary staff is another drawback. All the same, progress goes apace. Mass education has made great strides. Illiteracy is bounding by leaps beyond the shores of China. Patriotism and education go cheek by Jowel. This is one of the factors which has baffled the war-mongers of Japan and quite taken the wind out of their sails. Education makes the people feel that it is a People's War.

There is one marked tendency in recent years. Interest in science has warmed up. Since the outbreak of war there is a boom in technical subjects. More than fifty per cent of students take up engineering, medicine, science and agriculture. These experts man the war machine. Thus China's need for scientifically trained men is being fully realised. Institutions have also sprung up for other purposes. Young Chinese are equipped with knowledge likely to make them trusty leaders. The "Resist Japan" University specializes in subjects ranging from military strategy to social sciences. The influence of war is indeed paramount. Unity and discipline are ruling principles of education.

Female education has also made vast strides. In the days of the emperors, daughters of well-to-do families alone were given a little literary background. It was common to find an educated man wedded to a letterless woman. The coming of the Republic in 1911 brought with it the equality of women in the political

sphere. During the last thirty years the Chinese educational system is catering for women. At first the ladies had their own schools and colleges, but now co-education is the order of the day. There is a three-month course for women arranged by the New Life Movement. It prepares them for war-time work.

Space does not permit to paint a life-size picture of education in China. No doubt, it has its war-time weaknesses. Progress in the sphere of higher education is rather brisk. It has outstripped the primary grades. These failings are due to the teaching staff not trained up to the mark. Nevertheless, China's amazing strides are beyond dispute. This progress is undoubtedly inspiring. The torch of learning is being bravely borne in the midst of a great national whirlwind. It is the surest sign that China has the will to victory. New China is now arising from the ruins of the old.

CHAPTER X

PILGRIMAGE TO INDIA

Their Excellencies the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek undertook a wartime pilgrimage to India in February 1942. It deeply stirred the imagination of the Indian people and evoked their goodwill and sympathy. The visit was far more than a mere gesture of neighbourly cordiality. It was designed to strengthen the links of friendship, that stretch across the blue horizon of centuries. Like Chinese pilgrims of yore, they entered the home of Mahatma Buddha quietly and few even in high official circles were immediately aware of their presence. The veil of secrecy was lifted five days after they first landed on Indian soil. Before the journalists picked up the news of their august arrival, the Generalissimo and his party were comfortably settled in New Delhi as the guests of the Government of India.

A mysterious special train steamed into New Delhi at 1-30 P.M. on Monday, February 9, 1942. It stopped opposite the ceremonial platform. A slim figure stepped out, accompanied by a distinguished-looking lady. High officials of the Government of India received them. Warm greetings were exchanged. Then the party drove off in closed cars to the Viceregal Estate. The guests

were entertained to tea by their Excellencies, the Viceroy and Lady Linlithgow. Then they faced a battery of cameras amidst the fountains and flowers. At dawn on Tuesday the National Flag of the Chinese Republic was broken on the masthead of the residences where the guests were housed. It informed East and West that Their Excellencies the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek were in our midst.

The spokesman of the Government was in touch with the Press on this excellent dish of tidings, but the secret had been well-kept. On Tuesday morning however, banner headlines in the Press broadcast the most memorable event. The same afternoon Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the star of nationalist India, paid a visit to the honoured guests. Bombarded by journalistic questions, Pt. Nehru's reply was a single sharp bullet: "Of course, we talked about India, China and the world situation."

Following is an extract of the speech delivered by the Viceroy at the reception held in honour of the guests:—

"In the name of His Majesty the King Emperor, I bid you welcome to India.....This is a meeting which sets a seal upon the comradeship-in-arms of two great nations—nations which between them number eight hundred million souls—one-third of the population of the world.....China's heroism is the inspiration of us all.....she is the veteran of Asia's fight for freedomshe is mightily aiding us.....We believe that in

this shining example of China's unity there is enshrined a Jewel of great price, a precious hope.....India is proud and glad to receive you....."

The Generalissimo in his reply said :—"On behalf of the people of China I wish to thank you.....The subject of my visit is to have personal exchange of views.....The spiritual bonds between our two countries are.....no mere growth of yesterday. In days almost legendary, Chinese seekers after truth found their way to India after years of perilous travel through arid deserts and over sky reaching mountains to drink at the inexhaustible fountain of Indian philosophy. They took back to their motherland, in the face of indescribable dangers and difficulties, the priceless volumes which embodied the wisdom of India...When Japan made perfidious offers of friendship, the illustrious Poet Tagore in noble language voiced the burning indignation which India felt in being asked to grasp in amity a blood-stained hand...China is India's shield from land invasion."

Proposing the health of the Chinese hero and the heroine in the course of the Banquet, the Viceroy said, ".....The story of China during the last decade cannot be read apart from the names of our guests of honour. They have woven themselves into the heroic pattern of fortitude, determination and united endeavour, which China to-day holds up as it were a banner to the civilised world. I do not need to remind you of what is already history... Standing alone against a powerful and well-prepared enemy, she

(China) has kept alight the torch of freedom.....how near are China and India to each other, and how many of the priceless gifts of civilisation they have in common. In both, the ideas of culture and of kindness prevail: in both the lamp of freedom has been lit.....

“Her Excellency Madame Chiang Kai-Shek, we know, has been an inspiration not only to the cause of China itself but to the greater world, and most certainly to India. We have heard of her tireless labours in the cause of War relief and in finding home for refugee children and for the orphans of gallant soldiers killed in the struggle. We know too that she has been frequently exposed to the dangers of war and has accompanied her husband on his campaigns. It is our good fortune that she accompanies him, too, on his errands of friendship, and we are proud to have her with us to-night.

“.....We shall fight this war, therefore, confident and proud in the knowledge that we shall be with China through rough and smooth, through fair weather and foul until the victorious end. It shall be with us as with John Bunyan's pilgrim :

Who so beset him round
With dismal stories
Do but themselves confound
His strength the more is
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent

His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.

With God's help our pilgrimage, side by side with China and our other mighty Allies, shall not end..... until our banners of victory float at last on a free air, purged of tyranny and oppression."

The Generalissimo, in replying to the toast, aptly stated : " It is the united people of China, who true to their ideal, have borne the brunt of the battle for democracy." Further he added " I am truly impressed with the greatness of India."

The highlight of functions on Thursday, February 12, 1942, was a reception in honour of Madame Chiang Kai-shek by the All-India Women's Conference at the Lady Irwin College, New Delhi.

Replying to the address of welcome presented to her by the Conference, Madame Chiang said :

" Words are inadequate to express my hearty appreciation of the kindness that has prompted you to hold this meeting of welcome in my honour. The opportunity of meeting so many representative women of India alone is sufficient reason for me to join my husband in coming to this great country. Mrs. Pandit sometime ago invited me to visit India, but owing to my work I did not feel that I ought to leave China just then. The inward urge that I should come has been, however, latent for a long time. Therefore when the Generalissimo decided to take this trip, this urge became crystallized into action. Now that I am here and stand

in the midst of the women leaders of India, who like their Chinese sisters are making immense contributions to their beloved land in this hour of trials and tribulations, I am happy.

"Your Chairman has referred to the long and traditional relationship between our two countries, and to a renewal of those ancient bonds of culture. I wish to reciprocate in full measure this sentiment. The Chinese have always regarded the people of India as their brothers. Our two countries have had long religious association. Indeed, China and India are two pillars which to-day are supporting the economic and industrial edifice of Asia. We are proud of the important part which we are playing together in making the world safe for democracy.

"Mrs. Pandit has paid me a tribute for my share in the war of resistance to aggression. While appreciating this, may I have your permission to share the tribute with my fellow country women. In the past four years and a half, every section of Chinese life has been called upon to give its utmost for the nation ; and among those who have responded nobly to the needs of the crisis have been the women. The war with its multitude of problems, has brought forth a large number of new organizations concerned with refugee aid, war relief, increase of production enterprises and care of war orphans.

"Our Chinese women are doing their tasks willingly and cheerfully because one cannot live in China and

feel and think without being moved to action. The fact that a Japanese bombing raid kills 4,000 people in a single day may mean nothing to people living a great distance away from the scene, but when one hears flames roar, bombs thud, and sees the horrid outcome of meeting of human flesh and steel shrapnel, then the realities of war become very real. Chinese women have been the first to face such suffering and misery, and also they have been in the forefront to carry out measures for their relief.

“The desperation of the enemy—also your enemy now—caused by the failure to make military advantages at will has led him to pursue a policy of slaughter of innocent people, men and women, of violence, of destruction of property, and of indiscriminate bombing in the hope of terrorizing those living in the interior of China. Such Japanese barbarism has not only failed to terrorize Chinese women, to say nothing of Chinese men, but it has influenced them to work all the harder for the rescue of the injured, the safeguarding of homeless children and refugees, and evacuating of them to safer localities.

“Under the auspices of our Women’s Advisory Council, women have been encouraged to work on the farms in place of their men who have joined the army. For those women who are unsuited for farm work factories have been established to give them employment. The Women’s Advisory Council also sees to it that while their mothers are working either on the farm

or in the factories the older children are cared for in homes and the younger ones sent today nurseries. In the broad sweep of the war work carried on by the women of China, devotion and accomplishment have become common places.

"The poet Holmes once said. 'It is the province of knowledge to speak, and the privilege of wisdom to listen.' I would much prefer to hear what my Indian sisters have to tell me about their aspirations, their problems and their achievements, because of all this they possess an abundance of knowledge. While listening to what you are going to tell me, I have no claims to wisdom, but I am deeply interested in your problems and have come to learn.

"Madame Chairman in concluding, I wish to thank you and the members of the conference once more for the sincere and moving welcome that you one and all have been showing me during my short stay in India."

After the formal reply, Madame Chiang Kai-shek delivered an extempore address to the meeting:

"First of all," Madame Chiang Kai-shek said, "I want to tell you what you are up against, and I think you would want to know. I believe you are realists, for in spite of thousands of years of our heritage enriched by the development of the most profound systems of philosophy yet evolved by any people in the world, the people of China and India are realists. You may have to fight against a foe full of treachery. During the last five years I have repeatedly pointed out what sort of people the

Japanese are and what they have been doing in China, but because the Western world was too engrossed in other affairs, they branded my admonitions as propaganda. Now that the world has had a taste of Japanese methods at Singapore and Manila, they are realizing that what I said was not a figment of war-torn imagination but bare facts.

"In 1932 at Shanghai, when the Chinese and Japanese had agreed in principle on certain conditions and were on the eve of signing an agreement, that very night the Japanese bombed and set fire to the sleeping population of Chapei and tens of thousand of people were killed and wounded. Just before the outbreak of the present pacific hostilities, while the Japanese Ambassador in America and Kurusu were carrying on conversation with Mr. Hull, the Japanese again without warning struck at Pearl Harbour.

"A nation which has treachery as its policy in international dealings can never be trusted. The Japanese are already at your door. They have struck at China and Burma. Who knows what will happen when they strike India. They will say to you : We come to liberate you, but that is a lie.

"Do you know what happened in Nanking? After our troops had withdrawn, the Japanese rounded up every able-bodied man they could find there, tied them wrist to wrist, made them walk out of the town, beat them and bayoneted them. Later on the Japanese did not ever take the trouble to bayonet or shoot them but

made them dig their own graves and buried them alive."

After describing what the Japanese had done to Chinese women, Madame Chiang went on in a moving passage: "What did they do to our children? They captured them and took their blood for the purpose of blood transfusion. They also sent boatloads of our children to be trained as traitors to their own country. We have found many little spies who told us that they had been trained by the Japanese to work against us. This happened especially after the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1932, when their children were carried off in thousands and specially drilled to work against their fatherland.

When the Japanese occupy and seize a city they are not only out to loot everything but they try to kill the very soul of the people, everything to deaden body and soul. In cases when some of the surviving population were employed as labourers by the Japanese they received as part payment, injections of opium and heroin. The Japanese are an incredibly cruel and inhumanly callous enemy."

Calling upon Indian women to prepare themselves Madame Chiang said: "We did everything we could at first to appease the Japanese because we needed time in which to prepare ourselves. But when at last we knew the ruthlessness of the enemy we had to take up arms, ill-prepared as we were, for we realized that however terrible suffering and death may be, there was a worse thing—slavery of body and slavery of soul.

"China to-day is an acknowledged ally of the democracies but we have earned this name by fighting mostly with bare flesh and inferior arms, and by destroying everything of value which might fall into the hands of the enemy as we withdrew into the interior. We have burnt our fields: We have destroyed our houses and property in order to prevent the enemy from gaining them. We have this courage because we know that in order to save our national life we must have the fortitude to sacrifice our individual life.

"As soon as the war started we, women of China, formed ourselves into a women's council, a national body. In each province we formed a provincial committee and in each district a smaller branch. We followed a definite programme to help win the war. We trained and are continuing to train thousands of young women to go to every part of the country to tell the people what the war is about. In India to-day there must be many people who still do not understand what the war is about, and who must be told. Many women from schools and colleges ran away to join our war effort because they said they could not study while their nation was in jeopardy. I have trained such women personally. Among other lines of work after their training they go behind the army and do liaison work between the army and the people.

"At first the authorities asked how can girls go and work in the big hospitals when the men are so rough? Who could protect them? Do you know when the

girls went there the men called them army officers and saluted them as such! Now we receive hundreds of telegrams asking for more and more women nurses and workers for the hospitals. For not only are the girls appreciated for their nursing ability but also for the fact that they provide wholesome and improving entertainment for the soldiers during their stay in the hospitals. As in India, there are many illiterate people in China, and our women are also working against illiteracy. The soldiers are learning to read and write while convalescing. Many of our factories and industries have been destroyed. So we have had to return to hand industries. These are organized in production centres and we can show you the success of these by saying that not only has the standard of the people's livelihood gone up in districts where these centres exist, but also by the fact that by the employment of women in the centres, their men have been able to join the army. You cannot expect a man to fight in the trenches and leave his family unless he knows that his women are self supporting and can look after their children.

"The spirit of the new China is one for all and all for one. We are united by suffering, and victory will crown our efforts. In every worthwhile enterprise, there must be people who are willing to sacrifice everything they have for what they hold most dear if that is to be a success. We in China have those people. I do not mean the Generalissimo. I do not mean myself. I mean the people of China, the unsung heroes.

“ Like India, China’s roots are deep. In our fertile soil which is now soaked in the blood of our patriots, whether soldiers or civilians, we shall grow fruit for the future. Thus runs a Chinese proverb: ‘Think only of sowing; think not of reaping’; We of this generation shall not reap the full benefits of what we have sown but the generations to come will reap the fruits of our sacrifice. And as we to-day are reaping the fruits of labour of our ancestors, so must we be willing to sow for our children and our children’s children.”

February 13, 1942 was the birthday of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the Nightingale of India. Madame Chiang Kai-shek presented her with two pieces of beautifully embroidered Chinese silk. “The embodied flame of Chinese renaissance” was one of the phrases in which the poetess later summed up her impression of the honoured guest.

The Generalissimo left in the morning by plane for the North-West Frontier Province on a visit to the Khyber Pass, the Land Gateway of India, through which the Chinese pilgrim used to enter this country in the hoary ages of the past. There, I believe, he shook hands with the spirits of the Chinese travellers still marching down the zig-zag roads of the snowy pass. Going from Chungking to Calcutta, Delhi, Lahore, Peshawar and Khyber Pass instead of the opposite way round, the Generalissimo thereby performed the formal ceremony at the altar of the Goddess of Science who has changed the clockwork of human tide.

Meantime, Madame Chiang Kai-shek also, accompanied by Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit, visited Agra, where she spent three hours seeing the Taj Mahal, the Fort and other monuments. Giving her impressions about the Taj Mahal, she said, "I think it is the symbol of a spirit even more beautiful than the building itself ; because it shows that none of us really dies, even if our bodies die. I think it is a very beautiful building. I think the spirit lives on, and we think of the fact that so many centuries ago there was this devotion of an emperor to his empress, it only proves what the human heart and the human mind is capable of."

On Saturday, February 14, 1942, Dr. Hollington Tong, the Chinese Vice Minister of Information, met a Press Conference and warned India against yellow journalism. The Japanese were like a typhoon sweeping over the land and their coming was a message of chilled death. Only recently Dr. Tong's office has put out a remarkable slogan : "Every rumour is an enemy bullet."

On Sunday morning Begum Shah Nawaz M.L.A. (Punjab) had an interview with Madame Chiang Kai-Shek. Later in the day, her daughter, Miss Mumtaz Shah Nawaz, also paid a visit to the Chinese heroine. In the afternoon the All-India Students Federation presented a silken banner to Madame Chiang. On the banner were embroidered the words : "To the brave Chinese students from the All-India Students' Fede-

ration."

The Generalissimo and Madame Chiang met representatives of the Press on Sunday afternoon in the beautiful lawn of their residence. In answer to a question as to what impressed her most in India, she said: "I have been so short a time here, and India is such a huge country, that it is going to take me some time really to digest what I have seen. But one thing which has impressed me, one of the many things which have impressed me, is the fact that the women of India, like the women of China, will have to take a tremendous part in the reconstruction of the country. I have met quite a number of leaders among Indian women, and I am full of hope that the women of India will be able to fulfil that destiny, and I am greatly impressed by the selfless quality of the women whom I have met. And, if they are the representatives of Indian women, I assure you, India has an even more glorious future than her past has been."

Appealing to the Press, Madame Chiang said: "The war has to be fought not only with bullets..... it has to be fought by the Press.....Voices die out, but the printed word seems to live out in the mind of the reader.....you are a very vital part, a very essential part, in the India of today and in the India of tomorrow."

Asked whether there were religious differences in China, Madame Chiang said: "We have no clear-cut religious sections as in India. Religion has more or

less become part of life. Politics is not coloured by religions. We are all Chinese. We all are one.

The Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek, accompanied by their party, left New Delhi by special train on Monday morning for Calcutta, where they arrived the following afternoon February 17, 1942. On arrival at Howrah station, they were received by high officials of the Government of Bengal and other prominent persons. The party late drove to the Government House.

The Generalissimo and Madame Chiang met Mahatma Gandhi on Wednesday, the February 18, 1942, at Birla Park, Calcutta. Madame Chiang was wearing a Khaddar sari and had a "tilak" of vermilion shining on her forehead. The meeting lasted for nearly 4½ hours. Among those present at the interview were Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Mahadev Desai. An Indian lunch in Indian style was served to the guests.

During the latter part of the conversation Mahatma Gandhi used his spinning wheel for a few minutes and made a present of the yarn he had spun to the Generalissimo.

"You will have to teach me this," said Madame Chiang.

"Come to Sevagram," replied Mahatma Ji, "and I shall teach it to you. Let the Generalissimo leave you here as his ambassador and I adopt you as my daughter."

An official interpreter translated the thoughts of the Generalissimo to Mahatma Ji and *vice versa*. It was too much for the Saint of Sabarmati.

"But surely ours is not a formal official talk," he said. "Why should not the Madame interpret you?"

"Now, Mahatma Ji, that is devastating," she said. "Now I know how every one succumbs to you. My husband is most taxing. Whenever there is something very difficult to interpret, some delicate nuances of his thought to be conveyed, I must interpret him. But for one year I have been having an easy time, asking the official interpreter to do it for me."

"That means you are a faithless wife," said Mahatma Ji laughing.

"Surely," retorted the Madame. "He did not marry an interpreter, he married a woman."

The meeting was as short as it was sweet. The ladies of the Birla House encircled the Madame lovingly. The little kiddies, brimming with mirth and merriment, went skipping about her. In the autograph book of a lady, she wrote in Chinese, "The universe belongs to us all." True, India and China are the links of one golden chain that runs from East to West.

At the time of parting, the Madame said, "Who knows we may be back here sooner or later. And after all, Calcutta is only twelve hours from Chungking."

"Then you will pay me a monthly visit," said Mahatma Ji as he bade their guests a hearty good bye.

A light scene occurred at the time of departure. The spinning wheel presented to the Madame was by mistake sent to the station along with the luggage of Mahatma Ji and she could not find it.

"Where's my wheel?" said the Madame, "where's my wheel?" It was as if she had lost her treasure. But the mistake was soon found out.

"You shall have it," said Mahatma Ji "I shall send it on to you from the station."

"I have met too many men to succumb to any one," said Madame Chiang Kai-Shek. "But the Mahatama has captivated me." †

On the evening of Saturday, February 21, His Excellency the Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek gave his farewell message to the people of India. The message was read out by Madame Chiang Kai-Shek and broadcast from the Calcutta station of the All-India Radio.

The Generalissimo stated that his mission was drawing to a close. The briefness of his stay had not permitted him to tell the Indian people all that he wished to say. The farewell came from the depth of his heart. It was an expression of his high and warm regard for India. She is in duty bound to side with the anti-aggression countries and fight shoulder to shoulder with them. The following is a specimen of his characteristic force of logic:—

"I venture to suggest to my brethren, the people of

† "Harijan" dated March 1, 1942.

India, that at this most critical moment in the history of civilization our two people should exert themselves to the utmost in the cause of freedom for all mankind, for only in a free world could the Chinese and Indian people obtain their freedom. Furthermore, should freedom be denied to either China or India, there could be no real peace in the world."

"Is India's hour of awakening at hand? We do not know, but we do know that India or China are no longer suppliants at the white man's door."

—*New York Times* (On Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-Shek's visit to India).

CHAPTER XI

A NYMPH WITH WINGS

Madame Chiang is a nymph with wings. She is out and out an air-minded girl. With an unquenchable zest for flying, she is not afraid of taking to the air in poor visibility. China is particularly dangerous for light, because it is a misty and mountainous country. The province of Kiveichow has no great ranges. It is a rugged country, just a higgledy-piggledy mass of cone-like hills, some very curious to look at. Mr. W. H. Donald, adviser to the Generalissimo, describes these hazards graphically :—

“ The Japanese have lost many planes in these wild cloud-covered mountains. So have the Chinese. Madame Chiang Kai-Shek has just suffered a serious loss herself. The big Boeing plane which was presented to her, which was shipped from America to Australia, which the Australian Government refused permission to erect there, owing to some strange fear of Japan, and which was shipped to Hong Kong after months of delay on Cockatoo Island, or some such place, or Sydney Harbour, has just crashed and been destroyed, while being flown to Yunnan. A tragic business, but all of us who fly in these regions risk our lives every

time we go up.”†

In spite of all these dangers, Madame Chiang revels in flying. She adores the Goddess of Air. Her heart leaps up in the starry firmament. The blue element seems to be the very texture of her make-up. Like Johnny Keats she rises from the earth to the heaven and like Shelley comes down from the heaven to the earth. She has realized and materialized the very dreams of the Romantic poets. Here and there she gives a picturesque account of her aetherial voyages over the bosom of the airy ocean :—

“ We flew.....to the Yangtze River, over a countryof bright red, orange, purple, brown and other colours, which, with the varied greens of vegetation, looked like gorgeous painting. But there were heavy clouds, and we had to dodge up the valleys till we reached the Yangtze.....Then we flew high over the clouds (14,000 feet) to get smooth air till we were past the Taliangshan ranges, one that we flew by being 16,000 feet above the sea.

Madame Chiang is essentially a daughter of the sky and has spent long hours in airy journeys. She worships Nature like Wordsworth and cares nothing for sleepy fatigue. She has the untiring eyes of an eagle. “In spite of my weariness,” she said once, “I marvelled at the scenery.” Born and brought up in the cradle of war, she feels quite at home under the most threaten-

†“ From Chiang’s Headquarters” by W. H. Donald, “Asia”, April 1939.

ing circumstances. She shoves all tears and loses herself in the beauty of Nature. She seems to have a charmed life.

No other woman in East or West has flown so long and so often as this heroine of China. A maid of the magic carpet, she undoubtedly holds a record in mileage of flight, and that is a matter of pride not only for China but the entire Orient. Neither Japan, the land of the Rising Sun, nor Russia, the realm of the sickle, nor Germany shadowed by the Swastika, nor Britannia that rules over the waves, nor America, the kingdom of the stars and the stripes, has produced a woman who can equal Madame Chiang in her unique passion for flight.

The Japanese bombers have moved heaven and earth to strangle the life of China. There is a blockade of the coast. The railways are bombed along their whole lengths. Homes are demolished. Hundreds of people are mangled at a time. Machine-gunning of junks and highways brings untold ruin. "If the people of Japan knew what was going on in China," says Madame Chiang Kai-shek, "I feel sure that the militarists would not be able to continue with their warfare—to say nothing of their ruthlessness."

Since Japan started pounding the ill-equipped Chinese, the suffering of the victims has been indescribable. It is nothing short of a moral miracle that the Chinese heroes are undergoing a merciless ordeal of fire which no human flesh can stand. The following is an extract

from the diary of Madame Chiang,† written during an air-raid :—

“ I am writing this while I sit waiting for the Japanese air raiders to come. The alarm sounded fifteen minutes ago. I came outside, as I always do, to watch the raid, and more particularly to observe how our defence is conducted. When the planes arrive I will write down in order what I see.

“ It is now 2'42 p.m. It is a bright afternoon. Above there are cumulus clouds. High above them, orderly mackerel. Three heavy Japanese bombers come through a blue cleft between the piles of cumulus, heading from the north due south. Three more follow. Anti-aircraft guns put clusters of black smoke puffs around the first three. Now they are bobbing up about the second three. Here come three more—so there are nine altogether. High above the clouds I hear pursuit planes. The detonations of anti-aircraft guns are away in front of me, near the military air-field, which the bombers are heading for. Some of our pursuit planes appear. They have flown behind clouds. The sound of machine-gun-fire is now high above me. Above the clouds the pilots are fighting. The nine bombers proceed in steady progress across the city. They have to keep their line if they wish to hit their objectives. The first three are now over the south city wall.

2'46 p.m. Great spouts of flame ; columns of smoke and dust ascend. They have dropped several

† “ China Takes Her Stand ” in *Forum*, New York, December 1937

bombs. Then they scatter. Some of our pursuit planes are attacking. North of me a vicious dog-fight is going on. It started at 2'34 p.m. All the bombers now are out of sight, in the clouds, but some Japanese pursuits are still being harassed by our fighters.

" 2'50 p.m. There is a dog-fight in the North-West. An enemy plane, with a Hawk pursuit close on his tail, dives fast. He is out of sight behind Purple Mountain. The combatants are sweeping in and out of the clouds. The first three bombers, having dropped their loads, are fast disappearing in the last, bound back to their base near Shanghai. The other six, scattered by the pursuit, are circling in and out of the clouds to the south, trying to get a bearing on their objectives.

" 2'51 p.m. Suddenly to the South-West of the city smoke and flame and dust in great columns appear. Some more bombers have completed their mission.

" 2'55 p.m. While dog-fights are still making the northern heaven rattle with machine-gun fire other bombers sweep to the south and drop their bombs on the aerodrome.

" 2'56 p.m. More explosives are deposited in the same locality. High in the air, a little to the west, there is a dog-fight. Another is going on over the city, in full view of all who can see. A Chinese Hawk is chasing a Japanese monoplane. They are looping and turning and diving—and zooming up again. Their machine-guns are clattering. The raider seem to have our man ; no, he has escaped. They sweep away in wide circles

and fly fast at each other again. There is heavy anti-aircraft gunfire at the bombers now escaping. The Japanese plane seems to stall in mid-air. He is hit. The Hawk sweeps round to attack again. The Japanese pauses a while, then goes into a headlong dive; flames stream out, the doomed machine is heading for a thickly populated part of the city near the south gate. Orange flame, with a long comet tail of smoke, cleaves through the sky. The Hawk flies in circles, watching his enemy crash.

2'58 p.m. Now the raiders hit the top of the city. There is a great burst of black smoke and flame. Then comes yellow smoke—a house is burning. The Hawk still circles, then flies northward where other dog-fights are making noises in the sky. In and out of the clouds to the northeast and north-west planes are fighting. These combats have been going on variously from three minutes past three o'clock.

"3'10 p.m. One of our planes dives fast, with a great roar, from behind the clouds come three Japanese planes, all attacking him. He has disappeared from view, on his tail a Japanese plunging like a plummet.

"3'17 p.m. There are no planes now in sight. Engines in the distance are just audible. Only a column of smoke, from where the Japanese plane crashed to death in the city, is visible.

"3'20 p.m. There is now no sound in the skies. The raid lasted about 40 minutes. So I shall go, as usual, and inspect the damage, to find out the score of gains

and losses. I drive to where the plane crashed. People are in the street as if nothing unusual had occurred. Mother and children who saw or heard a flaming monster roar through the air near them and crash into a house nearby, with a mighty burst of flame, appear as if nothing of moments concerned them. Firemen are at the scene with hose and buckets. The fire is out. Getting through doors to a mass of smoking, charred timber, I am told the remains of the plane are there. It is difficult to find them. I am also told that the badly disfigured head of a Japanese is visible among the charred mass, but I do not look. I am anxious to discover if any of my countrymen have suffered. No one knows. A policeman tells me they will have to remove the debris before they can find out."

Madame Chiang Kai-shek, is one of the most dynamic personalities in the world. She has brightened and lightened the entire orient from East to West. In the versatility of attainments she has no equal in the far east. She has accomplishments unique to her credit.

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harvested from Confucius to Christ.

Ground in the most merciless millstones of education, she has nevertheless escaped unbruised. Omnivorous at books, she has matchless digestive powers. Her writings do not smell of foul unchewed fare. She writes and speaks King's English. A study of her books dazzles the reader. In literary and cultural greatness and glory she has few peers.

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S. v.

Madame Chiang is a voice of Chinese aspirations. As secretary and interpreter to the Generalissimo, she is China's Ambassador No. 1. In dauntlessness she has no equal. Through fire and steel she has risked herself. She thinks nothing of personal risks in airy fights. Like Mercury she skips from mountain to mountain. A belle with wings, her abode is in the blue firmament. A grand counterblast to the mystic philosophy, she is materially in the sky and spiritually walks on the earth.

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